Chastity
A Guide for Teens and Young Adults

Originally published under the title *Modern Youth and Chastity*

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[Note: St. Mary's College was once a major Jesuit school in the Midwest. It has closed, but the Church's moral teachings live on, and in this pamphlet they are translated into specific recommendations for young men and women--not just Catholics, but any serious religious person who seeks to lead a chaste life leading to a happy marriage.]

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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1940 a group of approximately fifty Jesuit Fathers met at Campion, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, for the annual convention of the Midwest Section of THE INSTITUTE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. In the course of that 1940 convention the members of the Institute (mostly student counsellors and professors of Religion in Jesuit colleges) thoroughly discussed the need of a text on chastity adapted to the intellectual and practical requirements of young men and women just entering college. It was agreed that such a book was needed; and a committee of t1free was appointed to plan and prepare the text. The committee wits composed of the Reverend Benjamin R. Fulkerson, S. J., A. Al., S. T. L., of the Department of Religion, St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri; the Reverend Clarence F. Whitford, S. J., A. AL, Ph. D., of the Department of Philosophy, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and the present writer. During the following year a text was prepared, and this text was unanimously approved by the members of the Institute at the 1941 convention. The text, as approved, was planographed and was used experimentally during the next year and a half. The present printed edition is substantially the same as the planographed brochure.

In preparing the book the committee sought to give to young men and women of approximately college age a clear, adequate presentation of the Catholic moral teaching on chastity. Since we presumed that the majority of the readers to whom the book was directed would be unmarried, we limited our subject almost exclusively to extra-marital chastity, and in our practical illustrations and applications we made frequent reference to questions of greatest interest and profit to youth of today: for example, kissing, reading, conversation, entertainment, and purity of thought.

We did not wish, however, to confine our treatment of chastity to the solution of practical cases. Because of the radical views on purity prevalent in our "modern world" our young men and women need to be well instructed in the obligations of chastity and to have a deep appreciation of the motives, particularly the Christian motives, that are calculated to inspire one to practice the virtue of chastity. We have included chapters that deal specifically with these points. Moreover, since the obligations and ideals of chastity can hardly be completely understood without some consideration of the more general questions of friendship, companionship of the sexes, and love, we have prefaced the treatment of chastity with several chapters on **Friendship and Sex Attraction**.

The experimental planographed edition of this book was entitled **Chastity, and Catholic Youth**. During the period of experimentation it was used as a textbook in many colleges and universities in classes representing a variety of groups--college men, college women, and religious of both sexes. A number of student counsellors also used it in their guidance work.

Many non-Catholics read the experimental brochure. and found it helpful. Some of these suggested that tile word Catholic be dropped from the title lest it give other non-Catholics the impression that the book is only for Catholics and thus deter them from reading it. Our non-Catholic readers themselves pointed out the fact that the larger part of the book contains material that would be very helpful to earnest non-Catholics, and that even the specifically Catholic parts would be at least informative, if not inspiring. We welcomed this suggestion, because the preservation of purity is surely one of the points on which all good people, especially those who profess to be Christians, should zealously cooperate.

A word about the authorship of the book. After the committee was appointed by the members of the Institute, it was agreed that the undersigned should write the book with the collaboration of Fathers Whitford and Fulkerson. Both collaborators assisted in planning the book and gave detailed criticisms of the completed manuscript. Besides rendering this general assistance, which extended to all parts of the book, Father Whitford was particularly helpful because of his knowledge of the psychology of instinct, and Father Fulkerson contributed from his own notes a large share of the concrete suggestions contained in chapters V and VI.

In conclusion, the author wishes to acknowledge a special debt of gratitude to the Reverend Francis Hurth, S. J., Professor of Moral Theology at the Gregorian University, Rome. Much of the material on the analysis of the sex instinct contained in the early chapters of this book is adapted from the private notes of Father Hurth and is used with his permission. Grateful acknowledgement is also due to Father Bakewell Morrison, S. J., Chairman of The Midwest Section of the Institute of Religious Education, for his encouragement, and to Father G. Augustine Ellard, Professor of Ascetical Theology at St. Mary's College, St. Mary's, Kansas, for invaluable criticism.

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Gerald Kelly, S. J.

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Chapter I

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

The main purpose of the first part of this book is to analyze the psychology of sex attraction. However, as will appear later, there are certain elements of sex attraction that cannot be properly estimated without reference to the more general notion of friendship. Hence it is necessary to begin the entire section with an examination of what is meant, or at least what *should* be meant, by true friendship. It has been our experience with many young men and women who read the manuscript of this book that at first some were strongly inclined to balk-at our description of friendship. Their idea of a friend had always been: "I like him and he likes me" I and they were displeased on finding that that notion could not always square with the qualifications on which we insist. After considerable argument on our part and further consideration on theirs, they have generally come to the conclusion that we are correct.

It is essential to keep in mind from the beginning that we are talking about *true friendship*, not about a mere emotional fascination, or blind passion, or a companionship of mere convenience which is struck up today, is carried on pleasantly for a time, and then dies of its own weight. Real friendship differs considerably from these things. A companionship may be styled a real friendship only when it possesses these three qualities:

1) It is morally helpful to both parties;

2) There is a genuine basis of agreement between the parties;

3) Their mutual love is characterized by a spirit of self-sacrifice.

A few words about each of these qualities will lay a solid foundation for the first part of this book. For the time being it is well to omit any special application to love between the sexes. These three qualities distinguish true friendship wherever it is found, whether between persons of the same sex or of different sexes. The qualities have not been chosen arbitrarily or at random; they are given here as the result of long and serious study of the real meaning of friendship, and with the confidence that any thoughtful reader will agree with the enumeration.

Morally Helpful

To put this negatively, it means that a companionship is not a true friendship if it leads to sin, to troubles of conscience, to a lowering of ideals, to a weakening of faith, to neglect in the practice of one's religious duties. Such harmful moral effects violate the most elemental idea of real friendship. Friendship is founded on mutual respect, and it is impossible to have a sincere respect for one who has the influence of poison on the soul. True love seeks the good of the beloved, and this good is never found in sin.

Friendship should have a positive influence for moral good. The appreciation of the worthiness of the friend should inspire one to a similar worthiness. It lifts up; it brings both nearer to God; it is a union in Christ. An intimate companionship is bound to influence both parties, and only a good influence is worthy of friendship. There should be mutual help to avoid sin, and mutual inspiration to the practice of virtue.

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This does not mean that in forming our friendships we must consciously strive for moral betterment, but it does mean that we should not consciously prolong a companionship that we recognize as morally evil. It does not mean that both friends must be equal in virtue, but it does mean that both should have an appreciation of and a willingness to practice virtue and that at least their influence on each other is not a hindrance to the practice of virtue. You can have a blind attachment for a person who leads you away from God, but you cannot have a genuine love for such a person. "I love you, so let's go to hell together," is language that simply does not make sense, whether expressed by word or action; whereas the contrary, "I love you, so I want to take you to heaven with me," is full of meaning.

Agreement

This point may seem too obvious for discussion, for we are accustomed to think of friendship in terms of common interests, common taste.3, similar likings, and so forth. The friend is one to whom we go for sympathy, encouragement, helpful advice, and inspiration; he is one with whom we can share joy and sorrow; he is, in fine, *another self.* All these things imply a very special kind of agreement.

Obvious though it may seem there are a few points about the agreement of friendship that may well be recalled here. The agreement, for instance, is genuine, not artificial. In this it differs greatly from mere fascination. If you have a strong emotional attachment to another, you will often note that it prompts you to like just what he likes, to want to do just what he wants, to think about things just as he thinks about them, yet all the while, if you are honest, you know deep down in your heart that the whole similarity is artificial, that this is not your ordinary way of living and thinking, and that it cannot last.

To know if the agreement of real friendship exists, one has to decide if there exists between oneself and one's friend a basis for lasting harmony. This does not mean that both must have exactly the same natural likes and dislikes. That kind of similarity may even be destructive of true, lasting friendship, because it makes things too easy, limits the beneficial interchange of views, and reduces incentive to mutual self-sacrifice dangerously close to zero. The ideal agreement of friendship implies the ability to work together harmoniously, with wholesome agreement on big and fundamental things and agreeable compromise in the lesser things. Differences of opinion and taste should be points of enjoyable mental contact and intercommunication, and not occasions for the breaking of the friendship.

Normally there must be some compromise, some mutual yielding in regard to personal likes and dislikes, in friendship. Few people can be intimate over a long period of time and always have the same desires at the same time or always be naturally pleasing to each other. There must be compromise, mutual yielding in such small things as how to spend an evening or how to decorate a room; there must be mutual overlooking of small faults and mutual respect for divergent opinions. But the compromise has to be limited to accidentals. It cannot enter the sphere of conscience. It cannot include such fundamental things as Creed, Moral Code, Method of Worship. At least for a Catholic, compromise in these latter things would violate the first rule of friendship. That is a difficulty often brought out at the time of a mixed marriage. The non-Catholic is sometimes of the opinion that he is being dealt with unjustly when he is asked to promise to allow the children to be brought up as Catholics. In reality, it is the only way that the case could be solved without an immoral compromise, for non-Catholics generally agree on the principle that one Christian religion is as good as another, whereas it is part and parcel of a Catholic's faith that his is the one true Church. He could not conscientiously allow his children to be brought up in any other church, whereas most non-Catholics can do that without violating their consciences.

The wider the field of intimacy and harmony among friends, the richer and more extensive is their friendship. Thus, all other things being equal, two saints enjoy a richer friendship than do ordinary people because their capacity for mutual sharing is more profound. So, too, all other things being equal, a friendship between two good Catholics is richer Than a friendship that exists between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, for the simple reason that the former have a much larger field of common interests and a much deeper bond of common sympathy. But, whatever be the scope of their mutual intimacy, friends should always realize that they can and should keep their friendship vital and make it richer by a constant striving to reproduce in oneself the good one finds in the other. And this really brings us to the third quality of friendship.

Self-Sacrifice

It is not mere poetry to say that true friendship involves a blending of souls. In any blending process, each element gives up something of itself, of its own individuality, and thus contributes to the common result. Friendship is the result of an analogous union of souls --each gives his best to the other. In practice, this giving of one's best means sustained self-sacrifice. Friendship cannot endure without it.

St. Ignatius, speaking of friendship between God and the soul, gives these two simple signs of the love of friendship: First, it shows itself by deeds rather than words. Secondly, if one friend has good things, he wishes to share them with the other. These are good norms for human friendship, too; they indicate the quality of self-giving that is the salt of all friendship.

To keep this from being too theoretical, it is well to look at some of the many practical ways in which self-sacrifice plays its part in keeping friendship alive. For example, there are the compromises already mentioned. Each compromise requires a certain gracious "giving in," and the willingness to do this is incompatible with unyielding selfishness. When you have known a person for a long time, especially when you associate with him intimately, you begin to notice small defects that you may not have perceived at the beginning; sometimes, because of changing moods, these defects begin to "get on your nerves. " These moments can be fatal to friendship unless one resolutely crushes the inclination to concentrate on them and make much of them. Or again, suspicions and jealousies may arise in the mind. The loyalty necessary for friendship demands that such things be banished.

A friend should be a resort in time of trial, one who can give sympathy and encouragement, one who has a willing ear for both troubles and pleasures. Often enough it is not difficult to exercise these good offices of friendship, but sometimes it happens that you are in a contrary mood just when your friend needs help. You would much rather talk about yourself. At these times, the readiness to fulfill. the duties of a friend cheerfully requires great self-sacrifice. Again it happens that at the beginning of friendship, both are quite spontaneous in performing little kindnesses and courtesies; but the familiarity of friendship has a tendency to blunt this spirit of thoughtfulness. Yet such thoughtfulness in little things must be kept up, and doing so requires constant self-discipline. Finally, each friend should be a moral inspiration to the other; and there in no doubt that the day-in and day-out attempt to be worthy of the other, to be a help to the other, makes constant demands on one's self-love.

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The foregoing examples give some indication of how friendship is a perpetual and mutual self-giving. This need of self-sacrifice may be summed up in a few words: there must be patience with defects, rejection of suspicions, constancy in service, a real desire and a genuine effort to understand each other--in fine, the practice of the golden rule by both parties, especially in bad moods, disagreements, and misunderstandings. In themselves, these occasions of difficulty are small, arising out of the fact that we human beings have many imperfections. But constancy in facing them and cheerfully overcoming oneself in them requires a high quality of love.

A Rational Love

After the explanation of the three qualities of friendship, it should be evident that the love of friendship is not mere emotionalism or sentimentality or sense appeal. It is a *rational* love, a *human* love. We human beings differ from animals in that our minds can *see* the good and that we can freely direct our affections towards that good. There may or may not be much external emotion in our love; our hearts may or may not beat violently; but the essential thing, the fundamental thing, the human thing is that the *head* must also be used. Friendship is basically a love of the mind. One sees the goodness, the character of the friend, and upon this basis one strives for union.

Perhaps we should add here that in speaking of friendship we have been considering the ideal. Of course, in any definite friendship the qualities we have outlined admit of progress, and it may be that in the beginning they are present only very imperfectly. But they ought to be present at least in some degree; otherwise the friendship can hardly be called true.

Chapter II

GENERAL SEX ATTRACTION

As a social being, each of us has a natural desire for companionship and for the more intimate joys of friendship. As a member of a definite sex, each has a natural, God-given attraction toward the other sex which is quite different from the attraction that we normally experience toward the members of our own sex. This sex attraction manifests itself in almost innumerable forms; but when these varying manifestations are analyzed closely, it will be found that they can be reduced to these three: *General Sex Attraction*; *Personal Sex Attraction*; and *Physical Sex Attraction*.

General sex attraction may be defined negatively by stating that it is not directed towards any purely physical satisfaction and is not centered exclusively on an individual. It consists mainly in a somewhat intriguing interest in the members of the other sex and a peculiar responsiveness to their distinctive qualities. When, for instance, are especially attracted by the grace, the emotional susceptibility, the beauty, the tenderness of women. Women are attracted by the strength, the courage, the energy, the calm deliberation of men. Each sex is drawn to admire those virtues or qualities which stand out in some special way in the members of the opposite sex. Each experiences a more or less innate hunger to hear the voice of the other, to see the other, to he in the presence of the other. Each experiences a certain natural curiosity to know more about the mental outlook, the habits of life, the physical characteristics of the other.

This natural element of mystery that surrounds the other sex and this natural responsiveness to the complementary qualities of the other is what we mean by *general sex attraction*. It has a God-given purpose. It draws the two sexes together in social life, shows them their mutual dependence on, and mutual power over each other, and thus ultimately leads to the divine goal of sex, marriage and procreation.

Dangers

Ordinarily speaking, a wholesome social life between the sexes should be helpful rather than harmful to chastity, as it prevents the unnecessary repression of sex attraction and should develop in each sex a fine respect for the other. Thus parties, dances, and group entertainments and enterprises serve a fine purpose. But it is evident that when this interest in the other sex gets absorbing, when a boy's mind is constantly on girls, and a girl's mind is constantly on boys, then the danger of a transition from the general sphere to actual physical temptation grows strong. And if, impelled by this general interest, one seeks physical contact, then the danger grows. For instance, some, without any thought either of love or of physical passion, are inclined to kiss, as they say, "just for the thrill of it." It is one of the inclinations of general sex attraction which can easily lead to passion or immodesty. Insofar as it does that, it is a danger to the virtue of chastity, and such impulses ought to be controlled.

Curiosity about the other sex does not, in itself, imply anything unchaste. But when curiosity becomes morbid, when it leads to a stealthy way of seeking "informative" reading and pictures, or when it leads one to try to see more and more of the body of the other sex, then it easily becomes a source of physical stimulation and can be a great danger to chastity. We must face one fact quite frankly: if we want to know something about the circulation of the blood, we look it up, get the facts, and are satisfied. Curiosity about sexual matters is a different type of curiosity. Usually it is more than mere intellectual curiosity and involves to a greater or less degree the stimulation of the emotions. This easily creates desires for pleasures or actions which might never have been experienced had not the initial curiosity been satisfied. It also leads to a subtle urge to go back over the sources of information, not really for acquiring knowledge, because that has already been gained, but rather for the pleasurable emotions accompanying the acquisition of the knowledge.

To be blind to the emotional danger involved in the satisfaction of sexual curiosity is to play the fool. The Church never feigns blindness to this danger; she is constantly on the alert against it. For this reason, she justly condemns many modern systems of sex education which involve such errors as the following: the wholesale imparting of sexual information, whether useful or not; the attempt to make the subject of sex so commonplace that it can be publicly discussed without reserve; the theory that sex education consists merely in the imparting of physiological information, without reference to the soul, and without at the same time educating the will to chastity. Errors of this type simply ignore the plain fact that physical sexual impulses are easily aroused and hard to manage. Smoking under the proper conditions is quite harmless, but it might be very dangerous in an oil refinery.

Does all this mean that curiosity about sexual matters may never be satisfied? By no means. It simply means that common sense precautions

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must be taken. A sensible rule would go somewhat as follows: A young man or young woman can safely know the physiology and psychology of normal set life. The desire for such knowledge is generally within the sphere of general sex interest, and will not usually be the source of serious danger to chastity unless it is given or sought in unwholesome circumstances. But the repeated inclination to go back and learn the same thing over again when one already knows it, and the inclination to see as much of one's companions as one can see--these things very often carry one into the physical sphere and frequently enough they are nothing but subtle ways of seeking physical stimulation.

Concerning curiosity, need we add that in the matter of sex there are some things that are better left unknown I The sex instinct, like other emotions, has its pathology. Our modern newspapers and magazines seem to be guided by the principle that they are free to recount, even describe in detail, anything that happens simply because "it is true." This is a false principle. Details of crimes and sickness must be known by criminologists and medical men; such details need not be known by ordinary people--in fact, the very reading of them often has a distressing and shocking effect on the mind and the emotions. It is advisable, even from the point of view of our psychological well-being, to discipline our curiosity about such things. We ought to be satisfied with learning, in a dignified manner, those things that are necessary for or helpful to us.

Chapter III

PERSONAL SEX ATTRACTION

At some time in his life a boy usually has this experience: he likes, or is attracted by, many girls, but he has a *special attraction* toward one. And, of course, girls will have the same experience regarding boys. This special liking for an individual may be a case of *mere friendship*, and nothing more, or it may be the specific manifestation of the sexual instinct that we have referred to as *personal sex attraction*. These two experiences are quite different in their emotional manifestations, and it is very important that young men and women be able to distinguish between them, Hence, we- shall give here some of the principal contrasts by which they can be recognized.

I. The Simple Friendship

By the *simple friendship* we mean friendship in the most ordinary sense of the term, the kind that generally exists between members of the same sex. Such friendship is frequently termed *Platonic*, a name which indicates that it is predominantly a spiritual, or rational, love, without strong emotion or tendency to external manifestation. For instance, when you think of your best friend, you will find that your friendship is based on the fact that you appreciate him as *good, agreeable, helpful, inspiring*. Such an appeal is principally to the reason and not to the heart.

A certain calmness (not coldness), therefore, is characteristic of the ordinary friendship. It may be very strong and warm, but it does not usually tend to manifest itself by caresses. Some people, of course, are more affectionately inclined than others, and they may naturally he externally effusive in dealing with their friends; but such external manifestations are not necessary or ordinary in this kind of friend ship. Again, friends in this sense may get great joy out of being together, but they do not become restless or fretful when they are not together. Finally--a very distinctive mark of ordinary friendship--it does not monopolize the heart; there is no concentration of affection on the one person to the exclusion of others. Each friend can have other friends; and if jealousy arises from the multiplicity, this is due rather to individual weakness than to the nature of the friendship. The love of simple friendship, in other words, is not only a love of the mind (as all true friendships must be), but it is *predominantly* a love of the mind.

The simple friendship is more commonly found between members of the same sex. This does not mean that it cannot exist between members of opposite sexes. Evidently there are many cases of men and women who are just good friends and nothing mere. Friendships of that kind, however, must be especially guarded against external manifestations of tenderness, and if they begin to show any of the special characteristics of personal sex attraction, they should be broken off unless the parties are eligible for matrimony.

II. Personal Sex Attraction

Personal sex attraction has this in common with all friendship that it is an attraction to a *person*, a definite person, and not a were general interest or a physical attraction to the body; but it differs from ordinary friendship in its emotional manifestations and in the fact that it has a specific part to play in the divine plan of sex. Hence the name, personal *sex attraction*.

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of *personal sex attraction* is its *exclusiveness*. A person thus attracted wants complete possession of the beloved. The mere presence of a third party is resented. The mere idea that the loved one might feel some attraction toward another brings about a powerful urge of jealousy. This type of lover find-, that his own emotions have been thoroughly captivated and that be has little or no inclination towards others; hence he wants the same response from his beloved, the complete monopoly of her affections.

The basis for this attraction is hard to describe, but it differs greatly from that of the simple friendship. In the simple friendship, the friend is *good*; in personal sex attraction, the other party is wonderful! Definitely, it is an emotional fascination. How it starts is often a mystery. Sometimes the parties know each other for a long time, and there is a gradual build-up to this affection; sometimes it "just happens" like the blink of an eyelash. But when it does happen, it is generally found that the attachment is based on one or more of the characteristics that attract one sex to the other, only now these attractions have suddenly acquired a sort of personification in this one *wonderful* boy or girl, as the case may be. The basis of attraction might be such a trivial thing as the figure, the walk, the voice, the expression in the eyes, a smile; it might be something as general as one's distinctively masculine or feminine attitude towards life; or it might be some special quality of soul, such as strength, tenderness, delicacy, and the like. Whatever it is, it goes straight to the heart; hence the strong emotional fascination.

Absence, even for a short period, is hard on this exclusive love. It creates an absorbing feeling of dissatisfaction, a yearning for the other's presence. It is hard to do one's work, hard to think of other things, One is inclined to write frequent and effusive letters. The nerves get frayed

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in waiting. But when the two are together again, then all is heaven. The reunion brings a thrill, a lifting of the whole heart.

But this affection is not content with mere presence. It tends to pour itself out in sweet words, in protestations of love, in kisses and caresses. True, these tender signs of affection are not intended as stimulants of physical passion; they are meant as signs of love. But naturally they increase the thrill of mere presence; they heighten the general emotional excitement, and thus can easily reach the deeper sphere of passion and lead to external immodesty.

If *personal sex attraction* is mutual, then the natural result of its absorbing exclusiveness and intensity is a complete mutual assimilation of interests in the two parties. They tend to like and dislike the same things. They want to share everything from the most delicate of secrets down to the old-fashioned "ice-cream soda with two straws." To put it in a word, this type of mutual attraction locks the hearts together; each is convinced that this state of affairs will last forever, each craves a complete oneness with the other; they want to blend and share their entire lives. What a perfect psychological inducement to marriage!

Purpose

The foregoing may be called a thumb-nail sketch of what popular terminology is wont to call *love*. Popular magazines list its qualities under such titles as "How to tell if you're in love," "How to tell if he (she) loves you," and so forth. Its manifestations are considered the proper stuff for cheap humor, ridicule, pep talks, paternal chats by "one who knows," scientific analysis, and what not. This general broadcasting and cheapening tend to make us forget the God-given purpose of personal sex attraction. It is true that it often does involve humorous and ridiculous situations and that one of the greatest assets of a lover is a sense of humor; but it is also true that the subject has a beautiful and serious aspect which is appreciated only when we realize clearly why God gave us this inclination.

Personal sex attraction serves as an inducement to marry, and within marriage it is a wonderful aid to a happy, and we might add holy, married life. When we say that it serves as an inducement to marriage, we do not mean that it invariably leads to marriage; but it does tend that way, and the facts show that it leads to marriage with a certain unpredictability. No two people can cultivate a companionship. like this and assure themselves that they will not want to get married. Countless others have tried that and failed. As a matter of fact, if this attraction is not intended to lead to marriage, why should it have the effect of so completely locking the heart on one person, to the exclusion of others? Marriage is the only state of life that requires such a love. Outside of marriage such exclusiveness is a social nuisance. Or again, why the natural tendency to a complete assimilation and oneness of life with the other person I Marriage is the only union calling for such characteristics. There can be no reasonable doubt that God's purpose in giving this natural attraction is to lead people to marry

Within marriage, the divine purpose of *personal sex attraction* is shown even more beautifully. In God's plan, marriage is to be a life-long union between one man and one woman. Fidelity to each other is therefore an essential quality of marriage; each must promise that when contracting marriage, each has a serious obligation to live up to it. If the married persons had only spiritual love and the inclination of physical passion towards each other, the obligation of mutual fidelity would be extraordinarily difficult, for neither spiritual love nor physical passion ii exclusive. Hence, this attraction of the heart is a very important thing to have before marriage, and a very necessary thing to cultivate during marriage. It is a help towards immunity from sex attraction by others. With this aid, and with the constancy of spiritual love, married people find a real joy in their life-long fidelity. Moreover, this unfailing companionship is not merely a source of happiness to the husband and wife and a means of enriching their own personalities; it also forms the proper background for the rearing of their children. For when the parents are united in this tender and enduring love, their children are assured of the maternal and paternal care. that befits them.

Limitations

Personal sex attraction, therefore, has a definite, God-given place in marriage and in the preparation for marriage. But it also has very decided limitations, and these should be recognized. Those who are married should realize that this type of love is largely emotion, and like other emotions it is not permanent. It will not last unless it is cultivated by a conscious endeavor to preserve the tenderness and thoughtfulness and mutual agreeableness that were present at the beginning of their marriage.

The chief limitation to be recognized by the unmarried is that this attraction, like the other emotions, is *blind*. It is not *necessarily* unreasonable, but it works without reason. It may go out to a pen-on already married, to one who is too old, or too young, to a drunkard, to a scoundrel, to a woman who would not make a good wife for anybody. It does not ask about the person's virtue or compatibility. It works just as blindly as one's temper, and just as instinctively as one's fears. It has to be directed away from the wrong person and toward the right person. In other words, it is not real love, but only a fascination. It can fulfill its real purpose only when it is combined with the deep spiritual love of true friendship. Hence, any prospective partner in marriage has to be measured first according to the marks of true friendship. If these are not present, then marriage is the equivalent of tossing overboard the happiness of one's life find perhaps even the salvation of one's soul.

This rational appraisal of a prospective marriage partner should be made before *personal sex attraction* gets too strong. Otherwise it requires more than ordinary courage to turn back, in case one finds one is wrong. Furthermore, it should be remembered that this kind of attachment tends to deceive the judgment, because lovers are always inclined to think that the other is perfect and that they are completely compatible. There is need of common sense to avoid this danger. One must. hold the emotional fascination in check, reasonably examine the reality, and have the humility to take advice.

Dangers to Chastity

Even young people who have deep and sincere love for each other should sensibly realize that this type of sex attraction can easily prove a serious menace to chastity. The principal danger, of course, pertains to the manifestations of affection by kissing and embracing. In the beginning there might appear to be no danger at all because neither party would think of any immodest show of affection. Nevertheless, they are emotionally thrilled just to be together and this emotional state is heightened by caresses, even when modest. In this heightened emotional state, physical passion is very easily aroused. Hence the need of observing the common-sense *F-E-A-R* rule given by Father Morrison in his book, *Some Problems and Their Answers* (The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee): When even modest signs of affection are *frequent* and *enduring* and *ardent*, there can be no just *reason* for them. That rule (F-E-A-R) is based upon the sound

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psychology that these things invariably arouse physical passion and this cannot be the aim of unmarried people in their demonstrations of affection.

For the young man, danger generally begins on the physical plane. He reacts swiftly to stimulation, and such reactions bring with them an urge to just a little more intimacy, which very quickly means an urge to immodesty. If these urges are not controlled, the result is sin. A young woman will very likely react less quickly in a physical way, though there is always a danger that emotional ardor will cross the line into physical passion, even in her case. But an even graver danger for her is that when her love is strongly stirred by marks of affection, then she will yield to his urges rather than offend him or lose him. Furthermore, nature has so fashioned her love that it exhibits in a marked degree the quality of *self-surrender*. When the fires of passion are once enkindled, this craving for self-surrender often becomes dominant.

The foregoing is not intended as a sermon. It is an objective psychological analysis of the danger to chastity that is inherent in *personal sex attraction*. We do not say that lovers need refrain from all marks of affection, or that they must be always in fear of sin. But they ought to realize that their instincts do need control and direction. And they ought to be able to enjoy each other's company without personal contact.

Not for Everybody

Evidently persons who are ineligible for marriage should not foster an affection of this kind. Nor should those for whom marriage must necessarily be a thing of the rather distant future. We are referring here particularly to young men and women in the early years of college and, of course, to all others who are in somewhat similar circumstances: for instance, those who will be separated by war conditions or other exigencies. We base this judgment on the following solid reasons:

1. The affection may rush you ahead faster than you thought of going, and you will contract a hasty and regrettable marriage. This has happened often.

2. You will be tied down to one person, and you will thus lose the general social advantages and contacts that should mean a great enriching of your life in the future.

3. By cultivating this affection, you expose yourself in a special way to the dangers to chastity already mentioned, because this love affair may be a very prolonged one, and the danger of violating chastity increases as the affection is prolonged without its logical culmination in marriage.

4. For a college student in particular: you will find it almost impossible to do full justice to your studies, and you may lose or seriously damage the very thing that you came to college to get-- an education, a profession.

There may be exceptions to these rules, but one cannot count on exceptions.

We have given considerable space to this discussion of what we have termed *personal sex attraction* because we think that earnest consideration of the strong and weak points of this attraction could do much to prevent the sorry situations that seem to be increasing rapidly today. This affection can be controlled and directed, and the time for exercising such control is before marriage. The idea that once the heart starts beating fast, all is lost, is absurd.

Chapter IV

PHYSICAL SEX ATTRACTION

The third type of sex attraction is *physical attraction*. This, as the word indicates, is an attraction of body to body. It seeks the other sex as a means of stimulating and satisfying physical passion; and it urges one, therefore, to such acts as will afford this satisfaction, chiefly to intimate and passionate embraces and, finally, to sexual intercourse.

Considered as *merely* physical, this attraction is something we share with the animals. Animals have the same urge, can perform the same acts, and obtain the same pleasure. The fact that it is animal activity, however, does not mean that it is beneath the dignity of a human being. Eating is also animal activity, but it is not beneath our dignity. But to act like an animal, that is, to be guided by blind impulse in these things, is beneath our dignity. If God should forbid us to eat a certain thing, it would be beneath our dignity to violate His law by eating it.. The ancient practice of eating to satiety, then vomiting, in order to get the pleasure of eating more, was certainly beneath the dignity of a human being. So it is with physical sexual activity: it is not beneath human dignity; it is not sordid, but it can be put to sordid uses. Yet the holiest things in the world can be put to sordid use. The Blessed Sacrament, for instance, has been put to the most sordid uses imaginable by impious men. Sexual activity i, put to many sordid uses by men, but it surely is not sordid when used according to God's plan.

It is not sound science to consider sexual relations merely in their animal aspect. They must be considered from all sides, if their true beauty is to be recognized. Psychologically, sexual union is intended as the expression of the noblest kind of human love; morally, it should be the consummation of the most solemn contract possible between two human beings. It is an act which Almighty God has decreed to be the normal prerequisite for the greatest event in the natural order, the creation of a human soul. In the supernatural order, it is not only a necessary condition for the increase of God's adopted family, but it has attached to it a most sacred symbolism. In the Old Testament (The Canticle of Canticles), the intimate acts expressive of conjugal love symbolize the love of God for the soul; in Catholic theological treatises on Marriage, the bodily union of husband and wife is said to signify the indissoluble union of love between Christ and His Church. These ideas show the full beauty that can and should be present in physical sex activity exercised according to God's plan.

This concept of physical relations also shows the depth of the meaning implied in the expression, *conjugal love*. For the love of married people for each other is not merely spiritual, nor mere emotion, nor certainly mere passion; but it crosses through all three spheres--the mind, the heart, the body--and is thus a distinctive type of love. Theirs is a love of the *mind*, a union of mutual esteem and appreciation which

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enables them to achieve harmony in the vast community of interests that make up married life; a love of the *heart*, affectionate and tender and exclusive; and a love of the *body*, through which they mutually find great joy in the utter self-giving which makes them "two in one flesh" and enables them to bring forth children as the fruit of their love. With this three-fold bond of love they are able to achieve the fun perfection of marriage. The physical provides for procreation; the exclusive attachment of the heart provides for fidelity; and the spiritual union of souls keeps them together unto death.

God's Plan for Sex Attraction

We can now have a clear view of the meaning of sex attraction in God's scheme of things. It begins normally with the dawn of adolescence, and during the formative years immediately afterwards *general sex attraction* serves the purpose of uniting boys and girls together in wholesome social activities and enabling them to get a proper appreciation of one another. During that time the impulse of personal and physical attraction should be held in cheek. Once sufficient maturity is achieved, then *personal sex attraction*, guided by, reason, can be used as the preparation for marriage. But this is not yet the time for physical impulses, so these must be controlled. After marriage *physical attraction* has its place and is the full blooming of the human sexual instinct. When these three steps are made in an orderly way, according to the law of God, sex is an aid to human perfection and a means of saving and sanctifying one's soul. This is, in outline, a psychology of sex attraction that fits into the Christian philosophy of life.

Chapter V

CHOICE OF A MARRIAGE PARTNER

The preceding chapters on friendship and sex attraction contain sound theory in a very compact form. They have to l)e read and studied thoughtfully before their full value is appreciated. But even after much study and full understanding, such theory is useless unless it is put into practice. The most important practical use of those chapters should be in the choice of a partner for marriage. In a certain sense, that question does not pertain to this book, as we are not dealing directly with the questions of courtship and marriage. However, many who read the book very likely are preparing for marriage and the question of choosing the right partner is bound to present itself; and even those for whom the book is primarily intended can profit by the consideration and thus know what to prepare themselves for and what to avoid, even remotely.

General Characteristics of Marriage Partners

We assume that all will agree with this statement: Human beings ought to prepare for marriage intelligently. Such intelligent preparation requires first of all the personal striving to fit oneself for leading a worthy and holy married life, and then the choice of the right partner. We shall say nothing about the personal preparation (though everything said about the partner might very well be applied to oneself), but we shall expand somewhat on the notion of choosing the right partner. Now, in general, it can hardly be denied that marital companions should have for each other: a) the qualities that each expects in his or her best friend, and b) sex attraction.

Your best friend: Leaving out the question of sex attraction for a moment, is it not reasonable to assume that a companionship so intimate as marriage, in which two people are called upon to blend their entire lives into one, must have all the requisites for the finest and truest kind of friendship?

And is it not unreasonable for a person to go to the altar and and enter into the most solemn kind of contract, in which he pledges his whole life to another until death do them part, without having some well-grounded assurance that the lasting qualities necessary for carrying on such a relationship happily and without extraordinary strain are present I Common sense gives the answer; so we say, before you marry anyone, check first on the qualities of true friendship and apply them as best you can to married life, and unless the prospect of fulfilling those conditions is very high, do not marry; and if you have already fallen head-over-heels for that particular person, break it up, no matter what the pain.

Sex Attraction: But marriage is not a mere Platonic companionship. It is definitely a relationship between the sexes, and God Himself has given sex attraction as an inducement to enter marriage and as a means of fulfilling its purpose. So, before marriage, there should be a mutual sex attraction. But, *it need not be physical*, especially on the part of the girl. Does that sound like an explosion of all the modern findings of sexology? It is not. We simply state, and we state it without equivocation, that one can *enter marriage* safely and surely without having any premarital assurance of physical sex attraction toward the person whom one is to marry. We do not say that physical sex attraction is not an ordinary requisite of a happy marriage; we agree perfectly with the statement that many marriages are unhappy because of lack of harmony in regard to physical relations. But we deny most emphatically that this lack of adjustment is the basic cause of the unhappiness. Almost invariably, the maladjustment is itself the result of something else; for example, undue ignorance, or fear, or the sheer selfishness of one or both parties.

In other words, we feel perfectly safe, both scientifically and conscientiously, in telling two young people that if they love each other with the love of true friendship, and if they have towards each other that attraction which we described as *personal sex attraction*, then they have the basic qualifications for a happy marriage. If such people are given competent instruction on the few difficulties that might present themselves in regard to the physical relationship, there is little to fear of marital unhappiness on that score.

These, therefore, are the general requisites for entering marriage: a ' true spiritual friendship, and *personal sex attraction*. They should be considered carefully before marriage, and not in a general way, but in regard to the needs of marriage itself. During the last several years almost innumerable tabulations of these needed characteristics have been printed. It is not our desire to add to the list of these catalogues or to write a compendium of them. However, we are going to indicate here many ways of making a practical application of the criteria of friendship and sex attraction, always keeping in mind that these criteria must be applied with a view to the companionship which is required in marriage. These criteria are meant for young men and young women alike, and we may be pardoned if we do not always use both

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pronouns. Whatever pronoun is used, both parties are meant, unless it is stated explicitly that the quality refers to the husband or the wife. We should like to preface these helps with the remark that this "check-up" cannot be a purely mechanical thing, like working a cross-word puzzle or adding up the score in a bridge game; hence do not mind if our divisions have not the accuracy of a catalogue of newly published books. In general, the summary of one's prospective partner (and incidentally of oneself) may be made somewhat as follows.

Moral Qualifications

The first requisite of true friendship (remember?) is that it be morally beneficial. Of all types of friendship, none requires this quality so much as marriage. *For marriage of its very nature is a state of moral perfection!* That may sound like heresy to a Catholic, who is very likely accustomed to thinking of perfection as comprising the religious life and the priesthood. As a matter of fact, it is a simple, basic ethical truth which acquires a new splendor in the light of the Christian revelation. There is no divinely established state of life which is not a state of perfection. God created us for His own glory, and in terms of our lives that means He created us to be like unto Himself, to manifest a divine perfection in our lives. He instituted marriage as one means of helping man to attain that end. In the Christian dispensation the family is a little Church, and that means that its aim is the salvation and sanctification of the members of the family. To think of marriage as a state of imperfection and the religious life or the priesthood as the only states of perfection is to cheapen an institution established by God and raised to sacramental dignity by Christ. All Christian states of life are states of perfection.[1] The various states differ from one another, it is true, but all have this in common that they are intended as means of helping souls to God. Hence, every person about to enter marriage should ask himself: Will this union help me to avoid sin and to save and sanctify my soul?

With these ideas in mind, try out some of these questions: Does he make you want to be better, bring out your loyalty, devotion, inspire you? Are you, as a matter of fact, morally better or worse for having been with him, and what can you expect in the future; in other words, would marriage with him help you to observe God's commandments and practice, your religious duties faithfully? Imagine a crisis in your life (poverty, sickness) that might make a high quality of virtue necessary in order to remain faithful to God, would he be a help to the practice of such virtue? Does he drink too much? Want to indulge in petting, even at the expense of chastity? Practice his religion? Control his temper? What are his views on divorce, on having children, on Catholic education, on the frequentation of the Sacraments? Can you actually point out any definite virtuous qualities in him that evoke your respect and admiration and inspiration? Are they lasting qualities, or are they put on for your benefit now?

Frederick Ozanam, one of the most illustrious Catholic laymen of the last century, prayed thus for a wife: "Above all I trust that she will possess solid virtues and a good heart, that she may be worth much more than I am and so draw me upwards rather than drag me downhill, that she may be resolute since I am faint-hearted, that she may be fervent since I am lukewarm, that she may be filled with a sense of compassion so that I may not feel too strongly in her presence my own sense of inferiority. These are my desires, these are my hopes." Ozanam, with the humility of holiness, underestimated himself. But he had the right idea of a worthy partner in marriage.

[1] In canon law the expression, "state of perfection," has a technical meaning and refers only to the religious life and the episcopate. The religious life is said to be the state of acquiring perfection; the episcopal office is said to presuppose perfection. In this technical meaning neither Christian marriage nor virginity in the world, nor the priesthood could be called a state of perfection. In our text we are not using the expression in this technical sense.

Agreement

Again we can argue from the requirements of ordinary friendship to the needs of marital companionship and say, if there must be agreement and harmony in all friendship, then a very high degree of such harmony is required in marriage. There should be a mutual understanding regarding religion and art and music and recreation, in reading, in conversation--well, in everything. A mutual understanding, that is, the parties have enough in common to come to harmonious compromises even in little things. They agree on big things, as we said before, and they know how to settle their little disagreements. When people achieve this kind of harmony, they avoid a prevailing situation that goes something like this: Jean likes a bit of poetry, but John likes to engulf himself in wood-pulp magazines; and when either one tries to read just a little bit to the other, things begin to go wrong in the house. Jean enjoys an occasional dance or theatre party, but John much prefers to sit with his shirt unbuttoned and his slippers hanging just over his toes and read his magazines or the newspapers until he begins to snore. The day comes when Jean decides she will have her dance after all, and John lets her have it; and after that many things happen, and now the little house that looked so nice when they were married has a "For Rent" sign in front of it, and John is living at the company boarding house, and Jean shares an apartment with a girl friend of hers. And the two children oh, yes, they are out with the Sisters at the orphan asylum.

Silly? Decidedly, but things like that happen. Just read the daily newspapers and see what a variety of trifles are listed under "mental cruelty" or some such charge for divorce. We are quite willing to admit that practically all such things could be ironed out by a decent spirit of self-sacrifice on both sides. But it is not common sense to leave everything to the manifestation of a spirit of self-sacrifice after marriage. Furthermore, there are some fundamental differences that you can practically wager will not be ironed out after marriage. Therefore, before marriage, the sane thing to do is to put infatuation aside and face the realities of life by checking up on the things belonging to married life that might make a tremendous difference in regard to this agreement factor. The following may be helpful questions in that matter:

Is there at least a reasonable degree of similarity between you in regard to the recreations you like? Could you both enjoy staying at home in the evening, especially. when children come? Are there any habits now that not only get on your nerves but which you find it extraordinarily difficult to overlook? Do both fit into about the same kind of social life? Does each get along with the other's family? Have both sufficient health for marriage? What are your respective habits of life: cleanliness, orderliness, good manners, good grammar? Are you able to harmonize judgments on things that pertain to family life: food, kind of house, furnishings, and so forth? Have you the same religion and same standards as to practice? The same attitude towards children and their education?

Do you feel at ease together, whether you talk about the weather or make love? If you do not meet for some time, are you able to take up where you left off, with something of the naturalness of a family reunion, or do you have to try to work up an acquaintance all over again? Has he a nagging, or reforming disposition? Do you see his failings, and are you willing to tolerate them; and does he admit them and is he willing to get over them? With children in mind, would you say that this person would be just the right other parent for them? Has he a sense of humor? Can he keep a secret?

Is it a wife you want: Can she cook? and make the house a home? Has she that womanly quality that instinctively puts things in order? (*The*

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Notre Dame Bulletin once cited the fable of a wise old fellow who tried this experiment: He was looking for the right girl, so he dropped a broom near the door. Five young women entered and stepped over the broom; the sixth picked it up. The wise man proposed-and there is much to be said for his wisdom.) And would this girl be a real mother; would that be a vocation for her? Could she bear children and sacrifice for them? Could she give the child that early introduction to God that would so fill his soul that he would never forget? Is she convinced that motherhood is an all-day and an all-night job; that it is the normal perfection of womanhood, and that those who take it right are enriched by it, no matter what sacrifices are involved? How does she speak of children? How does she treat them? What do her younger brothers and sisters think of her?

Is it a husband you want: How does he like children? Does he like to work? Can he hold a job? Has he a sense of responsibility? Is he "grown up," or does he have to be pampered? Too jealous? A braggart? An alibi-artist? Is he courteous?

You can multiply such questions till you are weary of it. They are not exactly a court-martial, but it is good to go over them because they bring one down to earth and keep one from estimating things merely on the score of fascination. Many points of agreement cannot be tested out before marriage, but often enough risks, at least glaring ones, can be easily recognized. Those about to be married must keep in mind that theirs must be a *universal companionship*. It is a psychological fact that you can work with some people, but you cannot play with them; you can play with others, but you cannot work with them; you can work and play with some, but you simply could not live with them constantly. In marriage you have to work together, play together, live together on terms of the utmost intimacy. And it lasts a long time. That requires great harmony in many things. What would be your score?

Self-Sacrifice

Selfishness is a terrific barrier to a happy marriage. A person who would have a favorable count on the first two points would, in all likelihood, not be selfish. Nevertheless, one should make a definite check of the prospective companion in regard to his thoughtfulness of others and his power of self-discipline. These few questions may be added to the foregoing as a means of making a more definite check on this important element of marital friendship:

At his home (each should know the other's family) does he show thoughtfulness of parents and brothers and sisters and do you get the general impression that this is ' the regular thing? What little kindnesses, not only to you but to others, have you noticed in him? When he is wrong does he admit it, and try to make up for it? Does he easily and graciously pass over others mistakes? Does he look for sympathy too much? Can he give sympathy willingly, or does someone else's trouble always bring out a greater trouble of big? Is he emotionally grown up; at least does he show that he knows his temper and jealousy and such things ought to be controlled?

As we said at the beginning we do not consider this set of questions mechanically perfect. It is intended merely as a tort of running examination to help one cheek up on the various things that pertain to friendship as it should exist in marriage. Many of the points mentioned are not in themselves important; the general picture that is created by the various answers is very important. A prospective bride or groom would do well to take advice from parents and good friends. They are on the outside and can be more objective, and they have very much at heart the question of a happy marriage.

Progress

There is one final point we should like to mention before leaving the subject of marital friendship. Perhaps we can best express it by telling what happens year after year in the novitiates of religious orders. Fine young men and women come to those novitiates bent on serving God with their whole souls. Gradually the ideals of the order begin to unfold before them, and to most of them at some time or other, there comes the depressing thought: "Oh, I can never get that high, not with all my faults." Then they learn an important lesson of their religious life: the order does not expect them to come to the novitiate as saints ready-made. It expects them to bring certain necessary qualifications for leading the life and a willingness to strive toward the ideals of that life. That striving will go on until death.

Marriage is not different, The various questions indicated here give a sort of conglomerate picture of the perfection towards which married people must be willing to strive. Neither party should expect all these characteristics to be present in a high degree at the time of marriage. But each ought to have the beginning of them and be willing to improve. And one of the supreme joys of their married life will be their mutual effort towards the perfect adjustment of all that pertains to their lives. A genuine willingness to improve is a guarantee of success.

Sex Attraction

Usually an examination is hardly necessary on this point; sex attraction is present or the parties would not be thinking of marriage. The more common difficulty is not to learn whether sex attraction is present, but rather to keep it under proper control. However, there are cases in which people make the mistake of thinking that Platonic friendship is enough for marriage, or they go to the other extreme and think that mere physical attraction is enough. Neither is enough. One must have at least *the tendencies* we described when we spoke of personal sex attraction. For instance:

Has your love an exclusive tendency about it, No that other boys or girls are ruled out I You need not be crude about it or go around insulting others just to show you care for only one, but you ought to notice a decided centering of your heart on this one. And have yon a tendency to feel jealous over this one party? Here again, the jealousy itself should be overcome, but the tendency is a good sign. And do YOU chafe when you two are separated I It is not a good thing to spend the time mooning or writing love letters, but it is a sign of sex attraction to be inclined that way. And do you want to kiss and embrace, or be kissed and embraced? There is absolutely no need of practicing these things, but the prospect should not be an unpleasant one. We always encourage reserve in kissing and embracing, and that in a good thing, even for engaged people; but the lack of the *inclination* would be a bad sign from the point of view of marriage. And finally, do you feel a growing tendency towards *oneness of life*; do you want to take complete possession of the beloved and give yourself completely? If these inclinations are present, then the necessary element of sex attraction is present,'and all that is needed in to keep this attraction of your heart from running away with your head. But if the love of the head in also present, and you are both old enough, and other circumstances of time and place and finance are favorable, then, as the old saying goes--let the wedding bells ring out.

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Chapter VI

"FALLING OUT OF LOVE"

The first practical application of our theory of friendship and sex attraction was the choice of a suitable companion for marriage; the second in the rejection of an unsuitable one. For instance, it may happen that after having read the preceding chapters and been convinced of their truth, you will realize that already your heart has rushed before your head and you are now thoroughly infatuated with a person whom you cannot or should not marry. This might happen in any of the following cases: You find that he is already married; or that his moral outlook is such that you could scarcely live with him without constant sin, or at least without the most intense mental suffering in trying to avoid sin-- as in the case when one party is an advocate of artificial birth control; or that your religious differences are simply irreconcilable and would create a danger to your own or your children's Faith; or that your general incompatibility is such that the chances are strongly against your achieving any kind of substantial happiness together. Or it may be that none of these conditions exist, but you are a young college student who has fallen in love, and you now realize the dangers that we have previously pointed out-namely, that a love affair will be exceedingly hard on your profession, will block off the general social good you should now be reaping and will in all likelihood end in sin because of the necessity of prolonging it through several years.

This cold hard fact must be resolutely faced: *sometimes love affairs must be broken up*. It is seriously wrong to cultivate such a companionship with a married person, even though civilly "divorced." It is seriously wrong to prolong a companionship with a person who would in all likelihood have recourse to contraceptives after marriage. It is seriously wrong to put your own Faith or the Faith of your future children in jeopardy. And generally speaking, it is seriously wrong to enter marriage with a grave risk of substantial unhappiness, because normally we need at least substantial happiness in order to lead a good life. This does not mean that one may not marry a poor man or a sick man. Such marriages, though they may entail much suffering, can be very happy if the parties have the virtue which makes suffering profitable, but the case of marrying a drunkard, for instance, in order to reform him is different. Experience repeatedly shows that the actual chance of reforming such a person is dangerously close to zero and that the chance of a thoroughly miserable existence is fairly close to 100 percent. That is an extremely grave risk for anyone to take.

Since there are many cases in which the heart must be brought into harmony with the head by breaking off a love affair, we are including here a few suggestions that will prove helpful in accomplishing this difficult task. The first reaction. of a lover to our suggestions will probably be to consider them brutally technical and lacking in a sympathetic understanding of the whole problem. We hope that further consideration will tone down this attitude. All the collaborators in this work deal constantly in problems of courtship and marriage. We know that what we advise is hard; but discipline of the emotions is always hard-it cannot be done under an anesthetic.

Conviction

All the emotions, even love, *can be controlled*. It is important that one who has to accomplish the difficult task of tearing his heart away from a person with whom he is infatuated should realize that. It has been done countless times; it is being done every day. Even those who have not the supernatural aids offered by the Church do it. So, before everything else, convince yourself that you can and will break with this unsuitable party. Pray for this grace of conviction and offer some little self-denial to obtain the grace, and then resolutely follow these three rules.

RULE 1: Separate Physically From the Party:

This means no dates, no telephone calls, no correspondence. You cannot discipline an emotion while constantly feeding it on the things that stimulate it. And, in regard to these things, beware of that "just once more" temptation; it simply makes final control all the more difficult. On the positive side: go out with others, lead a wholesome general social life and conquer the temptation to crawl into a shell.

RULE II: Separate Mentally From the Party:

Physical separation will not help a great deal if you continually feed your imagination on reminders. go do not think of the person deliberately; do not continually bathe yourself in self-pity; and do not start hating the person, because that may be only a subtle way of keeping your heart attached to him. On the positive side: get rid of such reminders as letters, the lock of hair, the pictures, other souvenirs; think of other interesting and engrossing things and people.

RULE III: Keep a Balanced Mental Attitude:

You will be inclined to become moody, and this must be counteracted by good sense. It is important to he convinced, quietly but firmly, that you are giving this person up *completely*. Hence, no compromising by seeking various foolish outlets: for example, seeking solace in sin, or drink, or in marrying someone else just for spite, and so forth. Keep a sense of humor, and do not take thoughts of the priesthood or the religious life *too seriously*. Things like this are sometimes the occasions of special vocations; but that is not extremely likely, so one should not get sentimental over the thought of hiding in a convent or laboring in some mission field till sheer fatigue brings desolate death. If one is eligible for marriage and not adverse to it, he (or she) ought to he convinced that there are in this world many acceptable marriage companions. It is not such a silly idea to pray for the right person.

Chapter VII

THE DIVINE PLAN OF REPRODUCTION

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The ultimate meaning of sex is reproduction. Only when we see the full meaning of human parenthood do we realize why God created us man and woman, fashioned our bodies so differently, endowed each in a peculiar way with the psychic characteristics necessary for fatherhood or motherhood respectively, and gave that strong mutual attraction that was the subject of the first part of this book. God might have established a world in which He would create each human being entirely, body and soul. In that case there would be no reason for sex and its accompanying characteristics. We could all have the same kind of bodies, and the height of our companionship would be the simple friendship.

God established the present order of things. He established a system of reproduction that requires the cooperation of human parents; He has the child come into the world weak and helpless and needing the care of the parents for his continued existence; He has the child mature slowly, with a distinct need for the care of his parents for his mental and moral training. All this is God's plan for human reproduction and for the human development of the child. Sex was created as a means of accomplishing these ends. We have already seen, particularly in the study of *personal sex attraction*, how the two parents are united together in a lasting love-bond that provides for the education of the child. Now it will be well to consider more closely the factors involved in bringing the child into the world.

A newly-born baby is the product of the cooperation of three causes: God, nature, and the human parents, God creates the soul; the body is fashioned through the operation of certain very intricate and wonderful biological laws; and the parents place the one condition necessary in order that God and nature may accomplish their work. No code of sexual morality can be complete or reasonable which neglects any one of these causes; go as an essential part of the background required for the moral principles of chastity, we are including in this section of the book the fundamental ideas pertaining to each of these three factors of human reproduction.

God's Part

God's special part in the making of a human being is, obviously, the creation of the soul. This is not the place for a treatise on *creation* or on the *soul*, but it is the place to recall that this one divine operation makes human procreation totally different from the reproduction of brute animals. At the moment of conception the living thing in the body of the human mother, formed by the union of two almost infinitesimal germ cells, is a real human being with the rights of a human being and the dignity Of a human being, with an immortal soul, formed to the likeness Of God, destined to receive the supernatural life of Christ and to live eternally in union with the Blessed Trinity.

These are not mere glowing words; they express a sublime fact. It is absurd to speak of the science of human reproduction and to ignore the soul completely. One of the glaring faults of many modern booklets intended as sex instruction for the young is precisely is this: they treat the birth of a child like the birth of a kitten, and say absolutely nothing about the soul or its Creator. Such instruction is not Christian; in fact, it is not even *human* and it lays no foundation for true morality. To leave out the soul is to leave no place for chastity. Only when we consider the dignity of the child do we see the need and meaning of a moral code that provides for the proper use of the function by which that child is brought into the world. With the dignity of the soul in mind, we can see that chastity is not the mere suppression of a natural urge, but the guardian of a sacred power.

The creation of the soul is the work of God, and of God alone. He uses no created instrument, neither man nor angel. It is entirely His product. But in His infinite wisdom He has decreed that He will create the soul only when certain other conditions are fulfilled. These conditions must be fulfilled by nature and the human parents.

Nature's Part

The part played by nature and the human parents includes these three functions:

(i) The production of the father- and mother-cells. The mother-cell is scientifically termed the *ovum*, plural *ova*. The father-cell is termed *spermatozoon*, plural *spermatozoa*. More briefly, the father-cells are simply called the *sperm*.

(ii) The transference of the father-cells to the body of the mother in such a way that they can migrate in search of an ovum.

(iii) The union of the father- and mother-cells, and the subsequent development of the embryo and birth of the child.

Of these three functions, the second is the voluntary work of the parents, the first and third are involuntary processes of nature. These involuntary processes are described with technical accuracy in any good physiology book. There is no need of our recounting them here with the complete detail of the physiologist, but we do wish to sketch their essential features with this purpose in view: These functions, too, though not the exclusive work of God, as is the creation of the soul, *are dependent on God, and do form a part of the divine scheme for human reproduction*. In an ordinary physiological treatise this idea is not emphasized; in a moral treatise it is of supreme importance.

Cell-Production

When a baby girl is born, she already possesses two tiny glands called *ovaries*. These are the principal glands distinctive of her sex. They are situated, one on each side, in the upper part of the pelvic cavity, which is located in the lower part of the abdomen. Even at birth they contain within themselves the beginnings of thousands of ova. As the child grows and matures, so do the ovaries grow and mature until at last they are about the size and shape of a large almond. With the age of puberty, the ova also begin to mature. But they reach their maturity slowly, only one at a time (except in rare cases), and at widely spaced intervals. When an ovum matures, the sac which contains it bursts, and it is discharged from the ovary. This phenomenon is called *ovulation*, the production of the mother-cell needed for procreation.

Puberty for girls in our country is usually between the ages of 12 and 14. Ovulation continues from this time until the *change of life* (the *menopause*), which usually occurs during the middle or late forties. During this entire time ovulation takes place with a certain rhythmic regularity. A rather ordinary period is one lunar month, 28 days, but this has many variations, both in length and regularity.

The principal glands distinctive of the sex of the boy are the *testicles*. These two glands are suspended between the thighs in a protective membranous pouch called the *scrotum*. In infancy they are quite small; when mature, they are somewhat larger than the ovaries, and oval-

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shaped. Each consists of a closely-compacted mass of tiny tubules in which the father-cells, are produced.

The production of the father-cells by the testicles is called *spermatogenesis*. This process, like ovulation, begins at puberty, which for boys in our country is usually between the ages of 13 and 16. A sperm is invisible to the naked eye; under the microscope it is seen to be shaped like a tadpole, with a head and a tail. Once the process of spermatogenesis begins, the spermatozoa are produced in great abundance and are stored in the testicles and also, according to some medical authorities, in the *seminal vesicles*, two glands within the abdominal cavity that are connected with the testicles by means of tubes called the *seminal ducts*.

There is no regular period for the discharge of the sperm cells as there is for the ova. The sperm cells can be kept for long periods of time, and they can be reabsorbed by the system. They do not have to be discharged, but it is a rather ordinary phenomenon that at varying periods the over-supply -will be discharged during sleep. In fact, this occurrence of seminal discharges during sleep is one of the usual signs of puberty in the boy. So long as it takes place during sleep, it should not be a source of worry, from either the physiological or moral point of view.

In the actual discharge of the sperm cells, many glands besides the testicles must cooperate. The tiny cells have a power of motion, but once they leave the testicles they must have some fluid in which to move. To aid their motion, nature supplies many other glandular secretions. A glance at the path taken by the sperm cells after they leave the testicles. will indicate the position of these subordinate glands. One seminal duct leads from each testicle through the lower part of the abdominal cavity, crosses down behind the bladder, connects with a seminal vesicle (which we have already mentioned), and runs through a large chestnut-shaped gland called the *prostate gland*. Here the two ducts converge into one and enter the *urethra*, a canal which emerges from the abdominal wall through the *penis*, the male organ of copulation. Glandular secretions are added to the spermatic fluid by the seminal vesicles, the prostate gland, and several smaller glands adjacent to or within the urethra. These added secretions, besides giving the sperm cells a medium in which they can move freely, also serve to nourish them and to protect them by purifying the canal through which they pass.

Internal Secretions

Besides the production of the germ cells, the ovaries and testicles have another very important function. They belong to the series of glands known as the *endocrine glands* (internal secretion glands), called such because they pour their secretions directly into the blood stream and not into some duct which takes them outside the body. The secretions of the endocrine glands are chemical substances called *hormones*, which have a great deal to do with general physical wellbeing, with the growth and development of the body, and with emotional life. The ovaries and testicles secrete the *sex hormones* into the blood stream. These hormones are instrumental in the development of the physical changes characteristic of puberty, and their presence in the system also has considerable influence on the sexual appetite. For instance, an over-supply of sex hormones is frequently the basis for excessive sensitivity in regard to purity and also for prolonged and disturbing temptations.

Other Natural Processes

The production of the germ cells is the first of the involuntary natural processes pertaining to reproduction and goes on without any dependence on union of the sexes. The other natural processes can go on only after the father-cells have been transferred to the mother's body; hence sexual intercourse is their normal prerequisite. Granted that this parental work is performed, then nature can carry on the following functions:

Fertilization: When the matured ovum is discharged from the ovary, it usually enters an *oviduct* (*Fallopian tube*). There are two oviducts, each lying very close to an ovary in the pelvic cavity. In shape, the oviduct is like a tiny trumpet. Its outer and wider end drops down below the ovary, and it is made up of -any little fringes, the better to catch and hold the ovum. The smaller end of each oviduct leads into the *womb* (*uterus*). In shape and position, the womb resembles an inverted pear, the wider part on top and leaning forward in the pelvic cavity, the smaller part (the neck, or *cervix*) fitting snugly into the *vagina*, a canal which leads to the external organs of the female reproductive system. Ordinarily the womb measures about three inches from top to bottom and about three inches in diameter at its widest part. The vagina is usually about four inches in length.

When the ovum enters the oviduct, it begins immediately to travel toward the womb. It can live only a short time if it is not fertilized, so we may say truly that it is traveling in search of a sperm cell. The sperm is deposited within the vagina. From there it passes upward through the womb and enters the oviducts. In any single seminal discharge, there are millions of sperm cells, and each one is hunting for an ovum. But the first one to reach the ovum claims it as its prize. The head of the sperm enters the ovum, and the ovum then spontaneously closes against all other sperm cells. The only probability of a multiple entry occurs if two or more father-cells reach the ovum at exactly the same instant. The fusion of the nuclei of sperm and ovum is known an *fertilization*, or *fecundation*. This is the beginning of a new human life, and in all probability it is at this moment that God creates the soul. At least for all practical purposes we must regard the fertilized ovum, no matter how young and small, as the possessor of human life.

Implantation: Every time ovulation occurs, a new endocrine gland called the *corpus luteum* is formed on the ovary. The *corpus luteum* is only a temporary gland; it does its work, then disappears. But it performs a very important work. By means of its secretions it "superintends" all the elaborate preparations made for the reception of the fertilized ovum. These preparations mainly affect the womb. The womb is naturally an extraordinarily strong and muscular organ, capable of great expansion, and endowed With the richest of membranes. When the corpus luteum sends the message that the ovum is coming, the inner membranes of the womb are prepared in a special way to be a fit nesting place for the human embryo.

After the ovum is fertilized, it travels slowly through the oviduct, and after a journey of several days it enters the womb. It bores into the inner wall of the womb, generally in the upper part, and membranes begin to form about it. This process is known as *Implantation*.

(If it should happen that the ovum was not fertilized, then it can claim no nest in the womb. In fact, it is very likely dead long before it reaches the womb; hence all these preparations are useless, and the womb begins to contract and to expel the blood and glandular secretions that have gathered in the inner membranes. The expulsion of these materials is known as *menstruation*. Menstruation, like ovulation, begins with

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puberty--in fact, it is one of the perceptible signs of the advent of puberty in a girl. At first the menstrual periods are likely to occur rather irregularly, but after a time they usually attain a certain rhythmic frequency, as we mentioned in regard to ovulation. Menstruation lasts from two to five or six days. It is sometimes accompanied by a slight sickness, but not ordinarily by anything serious. Adolescent girls should be instructed by their mothers or by doctors as to the best way of caring for cleanliness and health during this time. It is a rather remarkable thing that some mothers say little or nothing to their daughters about menstruation and as a result some girls are thoroughly frightened by what should be taken as a perfectly natural physiological experience.)

Childbirth: Once the fertilized ovum has nested within the womb, it begins gradually to develop from its tiny embryonic state to that of a perfectly formed human child. This development usually takes about nine months. When the child in the womb has sufficiently developed, the membranes in which it is contained break away from the side of the womb and the child begins to descend. The small neck of the womb widens to almost unbelievable proportions, and the child passes through it into the vagina, thence through the outer maternal organs. All these processes imply great expansion of the organs, especially of the neck of the womb and of the vagina. This expansion is brought about by a series of powerful muscular contractions and generally to the accompaniment of great pain to the mother. But it is a temporary pain which is more than compensated for by the joy of motherhood.

The only part that the external female organs play in childbirth is to allow the passage of the child to the outside world. These organs (scientifically called the *vulva*) consist largely of spongy, muscular folds of tissue. Their main functions are to protect the precious inner organism by forming a sort of ante-chamber to the vagina and to aid in the accomplishment of the parental union required for fertilization.

The Finger of God

As we said at the beginning of this section on nature's part in procreation, we had no intention of giving a mere series of physiological facts. Our purpose is rather to call attention to the tremendous meaning underlying these facts. That meaning can be aptly expressed in one brief sentence: The finger of God is here. Note how the production of germ cells is delayed until the body begins to reach physical maturity and how the process of ovulation ceases at just the period in life when a woman would find the burden of future parenthood too great; note the remarkable growth of the tiny embryo from two cells, one of which is infinitesimal, the other just barely visible to the naked eye, to a fully formed baby; note the adaptability of the maternal organism as the embryo matures and the child is born. Add to these facts, the pathological endowments of the father and mother respectively, and no reasonable person can avoid the conclusion that this is a divine plan, that joking about it is tawdry and that interference with it is criminal.

The Parental Part

The hand of God is no less evident in the part that the human parents are destined to play in procreation. This consists in the voluntary act of sexual union, by which the father-cells are transmitted to the body of the mother in such a way that they can travel in search of an ovum. We have already considered the psychological background and significance of this act, also its spiritual and supernatural symbolism. These things are evidently designed by the Creator, and this same design is manifest in the purely physical aspect of parental intercourse. For it is God Who gives to each of us as potential parents, a *generative faculty*, God Who attaches to the use of that faculty a special physical *pleasure*, God Who has given a strong *appetite* for the enjoyment of that pleasure. A word about each of these three elements will not only indicate how they fit into the divine scheme, but will also serve as necessary background for the subsequent chapters of this book.

Generative Faculty

A faculty is a power of doing something; thus we speak of the faculty of speech, of hearing, of thought, and so forth. A faculty exercised through the body must have an organism apt for that purpose. Hence, the *generative faculty* consists, in the physical organism necessary and apt for carrying on the part in sexual union proper to one's particular sex. In both sexes this generative power resides largely in the external organs of reproduction. The womb and ovaries, for instance, are not needed for the parental act; their function belongs to the natural processes previously described.

Normally, the generative organs are in a relaxed condition and quite unfit for union. But God has so fashioned them that the necessary condition is easily induced. They consist of a highly sensitive nervous system, of blood vessels of a peculiar formation, of strongly contracting muscles, and of glands that secrete freely. When the nervous system is stimulated, blood flows freely into the organism and, because of the peculiar formation of the blood vessels, it cannot leave so long as the nerve stimulation is prolonged. Thus the organism distends and becomes firm and even more highly sensitive; the muscle begin to contract, and the glands to secrete. All of these processes, even the initial stimulations, form a part of the operation of the generative faculty, and are frequently styled the *generative function*. Evidently, the voluntary stimulation or promotion of any of them must be regulated according to God's law for the use of the generative faculty.

Pleasure

To the harmonious functioning of each of our natural faculties God has attached a definite pleasure. So, the processes of the generative function, once set in motion, are productive of extremely agreeable sensations. These sensations are particularly localized in the generative system, but as they, increase in vehemence they become a blinding passion influencing the entire personality. This pleasure is sometimes referred to as sensual, a misleading term, because it is often applied to sense pleasures which have nothing to do with sex. The most common theological name for this specific pleasure is *venereal*. This word has come to have an odious connotation because it is so often used in connection with disgusting diseases; yet for technical accuracy it is really the best of all terms. It is derived from an old Latin word meaning "pertaining to generation" (after Venus, goddess of generation), and for centuries it has been used by Catholic moral experts as the most unmistakable manner of classifying the pleasure attached to the generative function.

Still another term used to designate the pleasure attached to the use of the generative faculty is *carnal*--a word which indicates that this specific pleasure is experienced in a peculiar manner "in the flesh." Finally, an expression rather commonly used today as synonymous with *venereal pleasure* is *sexual pleasure*. This last is not in itself a most apt expression, as it could refer also to the joys of general and personal sex attraction, and these are not necessarily venereal. In the following pages, when we speak of *sexual* pleasure, *sexual* desire, or the

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sexual appetite, we are using the word in the physical sense (therefore as synonymous with *venereal*) unless a wider meaning is clearly indicated.

Appetite

An appetite is simply a power for desiring or enjoying something. Almighty God has given all men some power of enjoying the use of their natural faculties, otherwise there would be grave danger that the purpose of these faculties would not be achieved. It is very difficult to eat, for instance, when sickness has blunted or taken away one's appetite. So in the sexual sphere, unless men were endowed with a. sexual appetite, there would be grave danger that the propagation of the race would suffer.

When the sexual appetite is stimulated, it immediately contacts or, we might say, expresses itself through the nerves of the generative system and sets in motion the series of processes that we described as constituting the generative function. The principal stimulants to this appetite are kisses and embraces of an intimate or prolonged nature. Thinking on sexual matters also has the same effect, as also have many other things which influence the imagination, such as suggestive scenes in books, magazines, or motion pictures, the sight of a person who is physically attractive, dancing, and so forth. The fact that so many thing-, in life can and do influence the sexual appetite makes a clear knowledge of the meaning and obligations of chastity very important.

Chapter VIII

THE MEANING OF CHASTITY

Chastity may be defined as: *The habit of regulating the use of the generative faculty according to the principles of reason and of Faith*. It might also be defined as the habit-of regulating the pursuit of venereal pleasure according to the principles of reason and of Faith. And still another definition might be the habit of controlling the sexual appetite, or sexual desire, according to those principles. Fundamentally, the meaning of all definitions is the same. Authors often frame the definition in terms of pleasure or appetite because it is the pleasurableness of the generative function which generally inclines people to sin against purity.

Explanation

We call chastity a *habit*, because we are speaking of the virtue of chastity, and a virtue is an enduring disposition of soul to do a certain kind of good. One is not said to be virtuous merely because he does an occasional good deed; even an inveterate liar might occasionally tell the truth. For the constant keeping of the various commandments one needs the virtues corresponding to them.

Chastity is defined as a *regulating virtue*. Note, therefore, that it does not necessarily consist in abstinence from sexual activity. Married people practice conjugal chastity by confining their use of the generative faculty to the limits God has established for the married state. But for the unmarried, regulation means total abstinence because, as we shall see, God has reserved the use of the faculty to marriage.

When we speak of the *principles of reason* we refer to the *natural law*, that is, to God's will as manifested in the very nature of the thing He creates. When we speak of the *principles of Faith*, we are referring to God's will as manifested through revelation. Insofar as *mere obligation* is concerned, divine revelation has added nothing to the natural law. Thus the Sixth and Ninth Commandments of the Decalogue, as God revealed them to Moses, imposed no new obligation on the human race. They simply put into words the law that already existed in the human heart and that bound and binds all men. But Faith does tell us much about the *perfection* of chastity. To keep the Commandments is a good and perfect thing; but to follow Christ, and to strive to imitate Him as much as our natural gifts and the grace of God will permit is higher perfection.

In the Introduction, we specified that we are limiting our consideration of chastity to extra-marital chastity: that is, to the obligations and ideals of the unmarried. To sum up this brief explanation, we can now say that, from the point of view of *obligation*, extra-marital chastity consists in abstinence from all wilful use of the generative faculty. This is, of course, putting the matter negatively; yet everyone knows that the observance of this norm is not something merely negative, but requires the practice of a great deal of positive virtue, and at times even heroism. Beyond the realm of obligation, the *Christian ideal* of chastity consists in following Christ even to the perpetual renunciation of the privileges that might be acquired by marriage.

Chastity and Sex Attraction

From what we have said, it should be evident that chastity is directly concerned with the control of the impulses characteristic of physical sex attraction. These impulses are immediately concerned with the use of the generative faculty; hence the voluntary indulgence in them is a violation of chastity for the unmarried. Normally, these impulses are directed to sexual union and to the intimate acts that form the natural preliminary to such union. Sometimes the impulses are directed rather to oneself, that is, to the solitary enjoyment of venereal pleasure; and sometimes they are directed to a person of one's own sex. Whatever he their object, whether oneself or others, such impulses must be controlled by chastity.

On the other hand, the impulses distinctive of general or personal sex attraction have no direct bearing on chastity. The joy that one takes in the companionship of the other sex, the thrills of personal love and of becoming manifestations of such love have no necessary connection with the stimulation of the generative faculty; hence they have no immediate bearing on the preservation and practice of chastity. But it ,would be quite untrue to say that they have no connection at all with chastity. It is a fact of daily experience that these various things do frequently act as stimulants to the sexual appetite, even though unintentional. Because they are likely to have this stimulating effect., they do pertain indirectly to chastity, that is, they present a danger to chastity that must not be courted rashly.

Other Stimulants

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As we have said before, there are many other things which, though they may be perfectly innocent in themselves, do endanger chastity precisely because of the fact that they have more or less power of stimulating the sexual appetite. Books, motion pictures, magazines, decent dancing, conversation about certain topics or with certain people, the study, of anatomy or physiology or various special branches of medicine-many such things can affect the generative nervous system, induce venereal pleasure, and thus incline the will to indulge in them precisely for that pleasure. In this sense, they too are dangers to one's chastity. And we might add to them, dangers that sometimes come from purely physiological and involuntary sources. For example, the condition of the nervous system, the activity of various endocrine glands, congestion of the organs adjacent to the reproductive organs, excessive fatigue, can also affect the generative system and thus be the source of disturbing temptations.

Various Dispositions

In the matter of sexual stimulation we should never forget that individuals differ greatly one from another. Some are much more affected by certain kinds of stimuli than an others; just an some have a much stronger appetite for food than others. Boys, for instance, are usually much more strongly affected physically than are girls; and a girl has to take account of this in dealing with it boy. Some people are definitely *hypersensitive*: that is, it is quite ordinary for them to be strongly excited by things that scarcely bother most other people. And any one individual might truly say that his own reactions to stimuli differ at different times. It may be that for a week or two or longer nothing seems to affect him; then for a brief period everything seems a source of disturbance.

All these things: different dispositions, varying strength of stimuli, and so on, clearly make it necessary for us to have a set of practical principles that tell us what we must avoid, what we must or may do, and what it is better for us to do. The peaceful practice of chastity is greatly aided by such knowledge. Before giving the principles, however, it will be well to spend a little more time in considering how the sexual appetite works and how it can be controlled.

How the Appetite Works

In general, we may say that the sexual appetite works along the same pattern as other emotions and passions. Take the emotion of anger. What happens when we become angry? A man strikes you; you feel that boiling state within you known as anger; you feel a tendency to do something about it, for example, to strike back. Before the man struck you, you were not angry; the fact that he struck you acted as a *stimulus* to your emotion. The emotion itself was the *response* to that stimulus. It is, in a certain sense, a very simple yet a very complicated emotion. It brings profound changes in your body and in your mental outlook. It is a state of unpleasantness and irritation, and you have a *natural* impulse to do something which will relieve that state. Thus we see that anger follows this simple basic pattern: a) stimulus; b) emotional response; c) impulse to do something about it. That a-b-c pattern works as a unit; it is, of itself, entirely involuntary and follows an elementary psychological law.

Again, consider the emotion of fear. In these days, when the air is filled with talk of war, it is natural enough to apply this example to a young soldier on sentry duty. He hears the signal announcing an air raid; he feels *afraid*; he has an inclination to run down into a shelter. The signal is the *stimulus*; the fear is the *emotional response*; and since this emotion also contains an element of tension and irritation, there is a natural *impulse* to do something which will bring a feeling of relief. Again, consider the fear of lightning. There is the flash of lightning acting as the stimulus; the dreadful feeling of fear that follows upon it; and the impulse to hide in the clothes closet. In both examples of fear, we see the a-b-c pattern of stimulus, emotional response, and impulse to do something about it.

Sex is no exception to this general pattern. A man, for instance, may be thoroughly unconscious of any sexual excitement. Then he sees an obscene picture; he becomes sexually aroused, that is, he feels a general emotional disturbance plus the beginning of the localized phenomena that we described in the last chapter when speaking of the generative processes; and he experiences an impulse to keep looking or to perform some immodest action that will heighten his emotional condition. His condition of excitement is basically one of pleasure, and we all have a natural inclination to continue pleasurable activity. The pattern is the same: stimulus; response; impulse.

Need of Some Control

All decent people will readily admit that our emotions and passions need some kind of control for the good of our individual personalities and for the preservation of peaceful social life. Suppose, for instance, a man is running to catch a street car and a stick is suddenly thrust between his legs and he trips and falls violently. The ear goes away, his suit is torn, he gets up in a rage and turns furiously on the person who tripped him. It is a blind man, feeling his way with a cane. Our angry friend seizes the cane and beats the blind man over the head with it.

The example is a rather evident one. We do not consider it reprehensible that the man was angered. In this case everything happened suddenly, and the a-b-c process was thoroughly involuntary. But carrying out the impulse of striking the blind man is going entirely too far. We consider that a reprehensible lack of self-control. In other words, the man should have disciplined his anger; and, if he in one who generally acts before thinking when he is angry, then he should cultivate the habit of thinking before he acts.

In the case of the young soldier, we do not (or should not) blame him for *feeling* afraid and for *wanting* to run. But if he actually runs and deserts his post, people generally look upon him with contempt. So, too, in the case of sexual excitement. The passion itself, following upon an unexpected stimulus, is involuntary; but the man would show a lack of needed self-control were he to give way to his impulse and seek further stimulation.

Thus, all decent people recognize that man is not supposed to be a creature of blind impulse. They recognize a need of control of our passions and emotions. They recognize that at times these things incline us to do things that *we are not supposed to do* and that the following out of such impulses is unreasonable and wrong.

Concupiscence

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The nature of our emotions and passions and their connection with good and evil should be perfectly clear to us. Certainly, they are natural tendencies that God gave us for a good purpose. Anger is a subjective state that enables one to preserve his life when unjustly attacked and to exercise a justifiable protection over others; fear also helps to preserve the life by warning against danger; the sexual appetite helps to preserve the race. But though these things have a good purpose, they do not always incline to what is morally good. To put it plainly, they tend to go their own way and ignore the higher good. Your temper does not ask you, "Am I justified in striking this man?" Your fear will not ask, "Is it right for me to run away?" Your sexual passion will not ask, "Would God be pleased with this action?" In other words, these and the other emotions are merely blind tendencies; they are natural insofar as they express *one side of our nature*; but to keep them from making sheer animals out of us, there is need of something to guide them in accordance with the dignity of a human being. They must be kept within the limits marked out by God, and these limits are made known through our reason and Faith. Hence the norm for all the emotions is that they must be controlled according to reason and Faith.

That there should be some conflict between our emotions and our reason is a perfectly natural state for a human being, since we are the only creatures in the world that unite such tremendous extremes as the spiritual and the material. It is only natural that the lower appetites, which tend to act blindly, should want things that conflict with higher duties. The understanding of this natural phenomenon helps us to see the real wonder of the gift of integrity, which God gave to Adam, which he possessed before the Fall and which all of us would possess if there had been no original sin. By that gift Adam had such perfect control over all these appetites that 'his reason was always the absolute master. There was perfect harmony, no struggle, no conflict.

The loss of the gift of integrity was one of the punishments for original sin. We now experience that natural conflict which God would have spared us. Our appetites are inclined to work independently of reason and even to want what is contrary to reason. This inclination of the appetites to work independently of reason is what is known as *concupiscence*. Concupiscence is not in itself a moral wrong, but it is an evil for us because it is the result of sin and because frequently it acts as a powerful incentive to sin. It is a force inclining us towards what reason tells us is forbidden, and it is simply a historical fact that no other appetite has been so successful overthrowing reason as has the sexual appetite.

Without the gift of integrity we have to struggle to control our impulses. But we are well equipped for the struggle. First of all we have the promise of abundant help from God. And with that we have our free will, which by the practice of various virtues, is able to act in such a way that appetites are kept within the bounds of reason. For instance, anger is kept within reasonable bounds by the practice of *meekness*; the impulses of fear are controlled by the virtue of *fortitude*; and the sexual appetite is kept within the bounds marked out by God by the practice of *chastity*. By these diverse ways of exercising self-control we fulfill that need which decent people commonly recognize in regard to the emotions-namely, they do not destroy our human dignity.

Means of Control

There are many ways by which self-control in sexual matters can be exercised. Without indulging in too many technicalities, we want to indicate here a few of the more obvious and practical points to be kept in mind in this matter.

In the first place, it is well to remember that the will is not a dictator in regard to the emotions. It has no absolute power. If a man kicks you in the shins, you feel it, and no act of the will can prevent. you from feeling it. And because you feel the kick, you feel irritated about it, and thus your adrenal glands are activated, your imagination is disturbed, and you feel like doing many dire things to that man. The will cannot prevent these feelings and dire thoughts from arising, and sometimes it cannot get rid of them for quite a while. Also, in the sphere of sex, if something attracts the sexual appetite, pleasurable sensations and disturbing imaginations are aroused, and the will cannot prevent one's feeling these things, and sometimes it cannot get rid of them.

But the will can generally refrain from any external action that these things may urge one to do. It is only in the rarest possible case that these external actions get entirely beyond the control of the will. It can ordinarily stand pat and refuse to do anything immodest. Sometimes, by seeking a distraction, it can get rid of the thoughts and feelings. Always, even in extreme cases, when thoughts and pleasant feelings cannot be banished, the will can refuse to approve of them.

Again, the will can very often avoid even the sources of stimulation, so that the sexual passion is not even aroused. We say "very often," because it is evident that, in the world in which we live, such things cannot be avoided entirely. Nevertheless, there still remain some untainted books and plays and other forms of entertainment, and by choosing these things rather than the "spotted" kind, a person can avoid a great deal of sexual stimulation. We do not say that this is always obligatory (that subject will be treated later); we simply give this as one way of exercising self-control.

Again, surely we all recognize this fact: There are some people who are always hunting for trouble. Not that they do it deliberately; but they do seem to cultivate an attitude of mind that seeks to be insulted, or angered, or abused, and so forth. And the same thing can happen in the sexual sphere. People can be involuntarily looking for trouble here, too, and thus they are all set to react to any stimulus they encounter. This disposition can be counteracted by the cultivation of a sincere, wholesome attitude that sees other things in life besides sex and thus does not react readily to sexual suggestion. This does not mean the brazen disposition of one who will walk into any sexual danger with the excuse that we ought to take those things "as a matter of fact"--such an attitude is sheer folly; but it does mean a quiet attitude towards the ordinary things of life and a refusal to be always on the lookout for sex.

Finally, we have to realize that we were created with a dependence on God, a dependence that is had in all our actions - To control our emotions, to will the good, and especially to counteract the inordinate pull of concupiscence, we have an absolute need of prayer. The Church is positively rich in the means that she offers both to inspire and to strengthen the will. We have but to use them and cooperate with them.

Chapter IX

GOD'S LAW OF CHASTITY

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The practice of chastity is obligatory for all people, married and unmarried, but evidently the norms must be different for the two states. Married people are within the sacred limits of God's law and therefore practice the virtue of chastity according to their state of life when they confine their use of the generative faculty to the rights conferred upon them in the marriage contract. The present book is written for the unmarried; therefore we shall say no more about the practice of conjugal chastity but shall confine ourselves to a discussion of the Law of God as it concerns the unmarried.

There are many ways of discovering the law of God. The pagan has his reason to guide him; the Jew has his reason and the Old Testament; the non-Catholic Christian has his reason and his Bible; and the Catholic has not only his reason and the various sources of Divine Revelation, but also the teaching authority of the Church. Of these various ways, the easiest and at the same time the safest method - of learning God's will is to consult the teaching of the Church. It is easiest because there is no difficulty in finding it, and it is stated very clearly in terms that do not require a highly schooled mind to understand it; it is the safest because it is purified of the obscurity that is likely to hamper the mind of the individual who seeks after truth unaided.

It is the most logical thing in the world for one who professes faith in the Catholic Church as God's official interpreter in regard to Faith and Morals to consult the teaching of the Church before he launches off into any investigation of his own. Approaching the matter first from this Catholic point of view, we are beginning this chapter by stating the official teaching of the Catholic Church in regard to extramarital chastity.

Teaching of the Church

We know of no ecclesiastical document which more clearly or beautifully states the Church's teaching than the Encyclical on *Christian Marriage* by the late Pius XI. Here are the Pope's words on our present subject:

> "Nor must we omit to remark that., since the duty entrusted to parents for the good of their children is of such high dignity and of such great importance, every use of the faculty given by God for the procreation of new life is the right and the privilege of the married state alone, *by the lawof God and of nature* [italics ours], and must be confined absolutely within the sacred limits of that state."

In those words, the Holy Father simply stated what has been the teaching of the Church from the very beginning. The expression, "the law of God," refers to the will of God as expressly manifested in divine. revelation; the expression, "the law of nature," refers to the so-called *natural law*, that is, to the will of God as written in human nature itself and binding all people of all times. Chastity, therefore, is not a precept that is distinctively Catholic or distinctively Christian or Jewish, but it is distinctively *human.* According to Catholic teaching, it binds every human being, regardless of race or creed.

Sacred Scripture

For all Christians, even those who do not believe in the infallible teaching authority of the Catholic Church, the Sacred Scriptures contain strong arguments for chastity. Many texts of Scripture can be cited in this matter; we ore limiting ourselves here to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter VI. This chapter is a particularly apt one for our purpose because it is substantially the same in all versions, Catholic and Protestant alike, and is frequently referred to in Protestant sources as a clinching argument for purity. Moreover, in this one chapter is contained an almost complete statement of the Christian doctrine on chastity, from both the negative and the positive points of view.

We say "almost complete," because nothing is said directly about impure thoughts and desires. However, these are clearly condemned by the Commandment, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," and by the words of our Lord: "Whosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

In citing the text from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, we are following the Westminster version. In this translation, the pertinent section

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of the chapter begins as follows:

"Be not deceived; neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor effeminates [i. e. those given to self-abuse] nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor cheats, no drunkards, no railers, no robbers shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such some of you were; but ye have washed yourselves clean, but ye have been hallowed, but ye have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

The foregoing words are taken from the 9th to the 11th verses. In verse 13, the Apostle continues:

"...But the body is not for impurity but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body; for God through his power hath raised the Lord, and us too shall he raise up. Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ? Am I then to take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot I God forbid. Or know ye not that he that cleaveth to a harlot is one body with her? 'The two,' it is said, 'shall become one flesh.' But he that cleaveth to the Lord is one spirit with him. Flee from impurity. Every other sin that a man committeth is a thing outside the body; but the impure sinneth against his own body. Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is within you, whom ye have from God? And ye are not your own, for we have been bought at a price. Glorify God, then, in your body."

Concerning this chapter taken from the writings of St. Paul, we wish to make the following brief observations:

1) *This is the word of God*. Now and then we find people who do not understand why the writings of St. Paul should have greater weight than those of St. Augustine or St. Thomas Aquinas. It is rather difficult to understand such a mentality. The Letters of St. Paul form one of the principal sources of the Christian Revelation. They are as much the word of God as is the Old Testament or the Gospels. There is no comparison between these writings and those of a private individual, even though said individual be a great saint or doctor of the Church.

2) St. Paul expressly mentions the sins of *fornication* (sexual relations between unmarried persons), *adultery* (sexual relations between a married and unmarried person, or between two married persons who are not mutually husband and wife), *self-abuse* (the solitary use of the generative faculty), and *sodomy* (impure acts between persons of the same sex); and then he gives a general condemnation of all impurity.

3) He teaches that these things exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven; therefore they are *serious* sins.

4) He implies that they are sins even for pagans, because the early Christians had to be washed of them in Baptism. In other words, they are against the Natural Law because that is the only law the pagans had.

5) They are sinful because they are violations of one's own body; and in a Christian they have the added disfigurement that comes from making the member of Christ the member of a harlot, from defiling a body destined to rise with Christ in Glory, and from desecrating the living Temple of the Holy Spirit. What nobler concept of the body, and what stronger reprobation of impurity can be imagined!

The Argument From Reason

St. Paul and Pius XI both stated that the use of the sexual faculties outside of marriage is against the law of nature. Now the law of nature is simply the law of right reason, so we can confirm our arguments from the teaching of the Church and from Divine Revelation by looking for a moment at the conclusions which sound reason draws in regard to extra-marital sexual activity.

We know the law of God in regard to created things when we know the purpose that those things were created to serve. In the matter previously treated in this book, we have already seen that the natural purpose of generative activity is threefold: *biological*, *psychological*, and *social*. A word to recall the essential ideas of these three purposes will serve as the basis for the argument from reason.

From a *biological* point of view, sexual activity is essentially *reproductive* or *generative*. This terminology in not coined by the Church; it is found in any scientific textbook. It does not require extremely profound thought to see, for instance, that when a man uses his generative faculty the processes set in motion are those which naturally culminate in the expulsion of the male germ cell. Nor does it require more profound thought to see that the female processes are intended solely as an aid to the reception of the male germ cell and to give it the opportunity of seeking the female germ cell. This is procreative activity; it is the one thing that human parents voluntarily contribute to the production of new life. Sometimes new life results, sometimes it does not; but this depends on other circumstances, not on the act placed by the parents.

We have also seen that from the *psychological* point of view the use of the generative faculty in a human being is not intended as a merely animal act, but as the culmination and expression of a great love. We saw the build-up of friendship; how, according to the plan of nature, two hearts are blended into one desire for perfect self-consecration to each other, how this consecration is solemnly made in the marriage contract and after that is solemnly sealed by the conjugal relation. When this order is followed, sexual intercourse achieves its true psychological purpose; it is an act of love which is utterly self-giving, not for a day, or an hour, bat for life.

Furthermore, conjugal intercourse serves a great social purpose. Physical union is not only expressive of the mutual love of husband and wife, it is also designed to increase and perpetuate, that love. Thus it serves the very important purpose of providing for the proper rearing of children. Surely it is easy for us to see that children are not like animals. They come into the world weak and unable to care for themselves, and they remain more or less in that condition for a long period of time. Their minds need careful development; their characters need Arm but loving training. They have a natural craving for mother-love and father-love. God fashioned them thus, and He ordained that the mutual and enduring love of the parents should be, not merely for their own happiness and perfection, but also for the sake of their children. Thus we say that the purpose of marriage (and of the marital act) is not only the procreation of children, but also the *education* (that is, the full, proper, human development) of children. This is the foundation of true family life and, therefore, the foundation of progressive human society. We may call this the social purpose of the generative faculty.

There is scarcely need of dinning further on such evident truths. Nor should there be need of any prolonged exposition of the argument that flows from them, namely: all generative activity exercised outside of marriage defeats one or more of these natural purposes and is therefore morally wrong. Furthermore, since these purposes are of great importance, any act which goes contrary to them is seriously wrong.

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Fornication defeats the *social* purpose of generative activity. The social purpose demands that sexual intercourse be limited to those who are united in the lasting bond of marriage, for only the married can provide for the proper education (as explained above) of the child. Fornication is also contrary to the *psychological* purpose of generative activity. The parties perform an act which implies a complete, mutual self-giving, yet they offer no real guarantee of lasting fidelity. That guarantee is contained only in the marriage contract. It is hardly necessary to observe that since fornication is wrong, then adultery is an even greater sin, for it contains all the sinfulness of fornication plus a violation of the marriage contract.

The solitary use of the generative faculty by seeking venereal pleasure through external acts or stimulating thoughts is wrong because it defeats even the *biological* purpose of the faculty. The generative processes are set in motion in such a way that they cannot result in procreation. And the same is true of impure acts with a person of the same sex and of artificial birth control. All these things defeat the most basic purpose of the generative faculty, reproduction, and for that reason they are styled *unnatural*; that is, they are even physically unnatural and would therefore be wrong even for married people.

Finally, still arguing only from reason, we can say that, just as fornication is wrong, so it is also wrong for unmarried people to indulge in the type of passionate and intimate caressing which is a natural preliminary to sexual union. And the fact that they do not intend to "go the limit" does not remove such actions from the realm of grave sin. For this type of sexual activity has the definite natural purpose of preparing the organs for union and of creating the desire for union, and the right to such acts belongs only to those who have a right to the complete act.

Conclusion

This brings to a close the argument from reason. It confirms what we saw to be the teaching of the Church and of divine Revelation. It shows us the *Natural Law,* a law which binds all persons under all circumstances. It provides for the minimum essentials of the well-being of the human race, and it admits of no exceptions and allows for no "extreme cases." Whenever men have been foolish enough to think (or think they think) that certain exceptions are permissible, moral chaos has been the result. We see that today in regard to divorce; that movement began with a few "extreme cases. " We see it also in regard to artificial birth prevention; it too began with a plea for "extreme cases." And, in another field, we see it in regard to the killing of the innocent. First the advocates of "mercy" wanted an occasional abortion "to save the life of the mother"; now they want it to save her reputation, to save her from hardship, and even to satisfy her whims. Already, they want to kill the sick "to keep them from suffering"; later very likely (as they are doing in some countries as we write this) they will want to kill the old and the sick to keep them from being a "burden to the state." Now they sterilize the "unfit," but there are already vague murmurings of a campaign that may bring these innocent people into the category of those who should be killed "out of mercy."

Once human beings seek one exception to the law of nature, they start down a steep precipice ending in general moral ruin. We cannot uphold the dignity of chaste wedlock unless at the same time we defend the absolute necessity and the high dignity of extra-marital chastity.

Chapter X

PRACTICAL MORAL PRINCIPLES

Are engaged People allowed any special liberties, Is it a sin to go to a somewhat objectionable or suggestive movie? When is kissing sinful? These are but a few of an almost endless stream, of questions proposed to priests at various times. The questioners always ask them with the hope of as brief, definite answer, and they perhaps seldom advert to the fact that these are among the most difficult questions to answer. The preceding chapters of this book should have indicated that such questions cannot be answered without taking into account a large number of factors. In the present chapter we are going to indicate as briefly, yet as adequately, as possible the main points that a priest always has to consider before he can answer such questions, In doing this we shall formulate certain practical principles that must be applied to these various cases. This should help the reader to appreciate some of the difficulty the priest faces, and at the same time it should be of some service in the solution of one's own problems.

Directly Venereal Actions

In answering any question concerning chastity, the first point to be determined concerns the action itself. In this respect, it should already be clear to our readers that there are two quite distinct classes of actions. In the first class are those actions which of their very nature are so closely connected with the sexual appetite that they serve the single purpose of stimulating or promoting the generative function. Such are the actions spoken of in the last chapter: sexual intercourse; intimate, passionate kissing and embracing which form the natural preliminary to intercourse; unnatural acts such as self-abuse or sexual intimacies with a person of the same sex. We may call these acts *directly venereal*, because their one direct and exclusive effect is to stimulate or further venereal passion.

These directly venereal actions are always unchaste for unmarried people. No "good intention" can make them right; for instance, a girl may not indulge in unchaste intimacies to avoid leading a lonely life or losing a man she loves, and so forth. The law of God in this matter is absolute, and to do such things for some so-called good purpose is simply to do evil in order to obtain some good. With these unequivocal notions in mind, we can formulate our first practical principle of extra-marital chastity:

FIRST PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE:
"Every directly venereal action is against the law of God, and a serious sin of impurity."

NOTE: When we say that such things are mortal sins, we mean that they are objectively serious sins. That is, the matter is serious. As we know from our catechism, for a person to commit a full-fledged mortal sin, three things are necessary: a) serious matter; b) sufficient reflection; c) full consent of the will. It happens now and then that an impure action is performed in a sudden burst of passion, or without forethought, or through ignorance of the real evil of the action, or when one is only half-awake, and so forth. In such cases, the second or third element for a subjective mortal sin is lacking, and one may incur little or no guilt before God. But such subjective excuses do not change the

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nature of the action.

Indirectly Venereal

Besides the actions that we have called directly venereal, there are almost countless other actions and situations in life which do frequently stimulate the sexual appetite, but which also serve another purpose *entirely distinct* from venereal stimulation. We are referring to such things as the following: the study of physiology or medicine; decent dancing; modest kissing and embracing; motion pictures, plays, and books containing an occasional suggestive scene or description; and so forth. Now, it is true that (as we said) these things often do arouse venereal passion to a greater or less degree; but they also and *primarily* serve another distinct purpose. The study of physiology or medicine provides useful or even necessary information; dancing, plays, and motion pictures provide recreation for the mind; the modest kiss or embrace is a sign of affection; and so on. The venereal passion aroused by, these things may be called a by-product, and for this reason we label them *indirectly venereal*.

The moral problem involved in these indirectly venereal actions may present itself in these two ways:

1) *Before doing something*, one is conscious that it will very likely be a source of sexual passion. For instance, a boy may know that if he dances, or embraces a girl he loves, his passions will be aroused; a girl may know that if she reads a certain book or magazine or thinks about her future married life, she will be sexually disturbed; a young medical student (or a nurse) way realize that his studies win have a stimulating effect on him. The question that each must answer before acting is: May I dance, embrace, read, study, etc., without violating chastity?

2) *While doing something* one becomes conscious that the action is sexually stimulating. He may not have thought of it before, but now he must answer the question: May I continue to dance, read, study, etc., without violating chastity?

In deciding whether such actions may be began or continued, one must keep in mind that they are not like directly venereal actions; they are not necessarily wrong. They will be sinful or not sinful according to certain circumstances, and these circumstances may be reduced to three.

1. Impure Intention

Everyone will readily see that if a boy kisses a girl *in order* to arouse his passion, or *in order* to prepare the way for some directly venereal action, his act is against chastity. Even though the kiss be externally quite modest he is really turning it into an impure act. And so of other things, to read a book, to look at pictures, to attend plays in order to arouse or further venereal passion is to turn them into violations of chastity. This would hold whether the action is *begun* for that purpose or *continued* for that purpose; hence we come naturally to our:

SECOND PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE:
"Any action is a serious min against chastity when it to performed with the intention of stimulating or promoting venereal pleasure."

2. Danger

Perhaps what we have to say about the second circumstance may be made clear by some examples. From our first two principles we know that these two things are always seriously wrong: i) the performance of a directly venereal action, and ii) the intentional seeking or promoting of venereal pleasure. Now, let us suppose this case: A boy kisses a girl. Externally, the kiss is quite modest and when he kisses her, his intention is not impure. Therefore, he does not violate either of the first two principles. Yet, let us suppose further that the boy knows that this apparently chaste action *generally leads him to go too far*, for example, to try to perform some directly venereal action.

Or suppose another case: A girl reads a magazine. It is not a bad magazine, though it does contain a few parts that are sexually stimulating for her. However, we can suppose she does not read for that purpose, that she merely wants some information, or some recreation. Hence, she too avoids the violation of the first two principles. But in her case too we are making the further supposition that this seemingly justifiable reading *generally leads her to lose control of herself*; her good intention wavers and she consents to the venereal pleasure aroused by the reading.

These two examples illustrate the second very important circumstance that must be considered when there is question of indirectly venereal actions. For both the boy and the girl referred to in our examples these actions, though not wrong in themselves, involve what is termed the proximate danger of serious sin. In other words, in performing these actions they are practically certain to sin. Everyone mud avoid a danger like that; one who knowingly courts such a danger is already showing a will to sin.

Situations that involve the proximate danger of sin are termed *proximate occasions of sin*. For instance, in the examples we have just cited, the apparently decent kissing is a proximate occasion of serious sin for the boy, and the reading of that particular type of magazine is a proximate occasion of serious sin for the girl. It is seriously wrong for one to expose oneself rashly to such dangers. Ordinarily we are obliged under pain of serious sin to avoid such occasions. If the occasion cannot be avoided, as may happen in certain rather rare instances, then we must find some means which will fortify us against the danger. Expert counsel is usually required in such cases.

Obscenity

To a great extent, proximate occasions of sin differ with different individuals; hence the difficulty of solving eases for a group. However, there are some things which are commonly and practically universally proximate occasions. For instance, the modern burlesque show is planned along such sexually stimulating lines that it is a proximate occasion for almost anyone. In fact, we may say in general that real obscenity usually constitutes a proximate danger of sin. The term, obscenity, is frequently used with a rather wide and vague meaning, but with the moral expert it is very technical. Let us illustrate from things to which the term is especially applicable, namely, obscene "literature" and theatrical productions. For such things to be obscene, two elements are required: a) their theme, or content is of an impure or sexually-exciting nature; and b) their manner of presentation is such as to throw an attractive emphasis on that impure or sexually-exciting element. For instance,

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adultery is a sin of impurity; so when a book or play not only centers about adultery but portrays it in an attractive manner, such a play or book is obscene. Again, excessive nudity, and especially disrobing by a woman in the presence of a man are commonly recognized as strongly stimulating to the sexual passions. Hence, when such things are alluringly emphasized and advertised, as they are in most modern burlesque shows, the shows must be called obscene.

This rather lengthy discussion of the meaning of proximate danger was necessary for our purpose. We can now summarize it in our:

THIRD PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE:
"It in mortal sin for one to expose oneself freely and knowingly to the proximate danger of performing a directly venereal action or of consenting to venereal pleasure."

3. Insufficient Reason

In the first three principles we have indicated the three possible sources of mortal sins against purity: a) impure *action*; b) impure *intention*; c) wilful *proximate danger* of either. One who guards against these three things avoids mortal sin. However, that does not necessarily mean that he avoids all sin. It is possible to commit a venial sin in this matter by acting *without a relatively sufficient reason*. This statement calls for a brief explanation; then we can formulate it into a practical principle.

In the second principle, we stated that one commits a mortal sin if his intention is impure. This implies that to avoid mortal sin one must have some reason for acting which is not impure. Now evidently such "pure" reasons are very numerous and they vary in value. A school teacher who must read a mystery story that contains some sexually-disturbing passages surely has a better reason for reading than a person who reads the same story merely for recreation. Engaged people have a better reason for decent affectionate embracing than have those who are not engaged. A medical student has a better reason for reading a medical treatise than a person who is interested in medicine merely as a hobby or who is just curious to know the contents of the book.

Again, consider the third principle. In it we considered the ease of proximate danger, and we explained this as referring to a situation in which one generally loses control of oneself and commits an impure action or fully consents to venereal passion. For instance, John knows that when he reads his father's medical books, he suffers violent temptations and generally gives in. The direct opposite of proximate danger is *remote danger*, which may be explained as referring to situations in which one generally does not lose self-control. For example, James reads the same books, is very little disturbed by them, and they seldom or never prove a source of sin to him.

Everyone should see that between the two extremes (proximate and remote) there lies a wide zone which might be termed *intermediate danger*. For example, Joseph also reads the medical books. He cannot say they are a proximate occasion of sin for him, nor can he say simply that the danger of sin is thoroughly remote. In other words, he does *occasionally* lose control of himself.

Now, the point we wish to make here is a simple one: Joseph is obliged to exercise more caution in regard to this reading than is James. For Joseph takes some risk, James practically none. And the cases of Joseph and James are only examples. They illustrate the point that some actions or thoughts need a greater reason for perfect justification than do others. In other words, for an indirectly venereal action to be perfectly justifiable, that is, not even venially sinful, one must have a *relatively sufficient* reason. Without such a reason he takes a needless risk and is guilty of some negligence or insincerity.

Obviously, the determination of what constitutes a sufficient reason is not a question of mathematics. Nevertheless, the normal rule is about as follows: The more stimulating the thought or action, the stronger must be the reason, because usually the danger of sin and insincerity increases with the vehemence of passion.

Usually this lack of a sufficient reason constitutes a venial sin. Examples might be: curious and imprudent looks and reading; delaying on dangerous thoughts through idle curiosity; unduly prolonged or repeated kisses by lovers, even though they intend no passion; kissing from frivolous motives; and so forth. In such cases Were is no outright wilful impurity, and no mortal sin, but there is a lack of due caution or some degree of insincerity. These cases can all be comprised under this:

FOURTH PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE:
"It is a venial sin to perform an indirectly venereal action without a relatively sufficient reason."

(NOTE: In this last principle we have not referred to those cases in which there is really a complete fundamental lack of sincerity. But it does happen at times that people merely deceive themselves in the matter of impurity. They want venereal pleasure, but they do not like to admit it, even to themselves. Hence, they read strongly stimulating things, dwell on stimulating thoughts-- always with a certain pretense that they have some other motive. In reality, they violate the second principle but rationalize themselves out of guilt, at least serious guilt. It is often difficult to estimate these cases, as mental quirks develop easily in one who is not sincerely devoted to chastity.)

Sinless Actions

The four preceding principles have taken care of anything that might be sinful in regard to chastity. It remains merely to indicate what is *sinless*. Practically speaking, our actions are sinless when they are *reasonable*. In other words, when we have a good reason for our thoughts or actions, we may think or act, and ignore the sexual-stimulation that may accidentally result. Thus, necessity permits the intimate actions of a medical examination. The acquisition of useful or necessary knowledge permits young doctors, nurse, theologians, and instructors to study things which might at times be strongly stimulating. Normal recreation is sufficient to justify things which are only slightly stimulating (as some people may notice regarding dancing, slightly suggestive motion pictures, generally decent picture magazines, and so forth). Hypersensitive people, that is, those who are bothered by things which do not disturb others and greatly bothered by things which only slightly disturb others, may live as others do in this matter, so long an their intention is good. Sometimes it is better for them to live as others do; sometimes the more advisable course is to lead a more careful life. They need sound personal direction.

What we have said about sinlessness can now be summarized in our:

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FIFTH PRACTICAL PRINCIPLE:
"Indirectly venereal actions are not sinful if one has a good and sufficient reason for beginning or continuing such actions."

The Law of Charity

The foregoing principles are norms of conduct in regard to one's *personal chastity*. In things that involve other people, however, we must always have regard for another great law of morality, the *law of charity*. By this law we are bound not to induce others to sin or to help them to sin, and we must also take reasonable means to prevent their sinning when we can do so. What these "reasonable means" are depends largely on circumstances, and complicated situations require the expert direction of a priest. But it should be clear that in general in regard to such things as kissing, conversation, and choosing forms of entertainment for oneself and others, we cannot simply settle the matter by saying: "It doesn't bother me; therefore it's all right."

It is difficult to give any absolute rule for judging the reactions of others. A fair presumption is that they will be about the same an our own, unless either party happens to be extraordinarily callous or sensitive, or unless some special circumstance such as adolescence indicates greater danger. Particularly in the matter of kissing, a girl must keep in mind that a boy is more responsive physically than she; but if there is some good reason for a decent manifestation of affection, she may presume that he has proper control of himself unless he attempts or suggests immodesty.

Summary: Four Questions

If one understands the principles explained, he can then reduce them to practice by answering four questions:

1) *What* am I doing, or about to do?

2) *Why* am I doing it or about to do it

3) What *dangers* are involved for myself or others 1

4) Have I a sufficient reason to render my action perfectly justifiable?

These four questions will solve all the ordinary problems involving our voluntary conduct with respect to chastity. One who knows them learns to apply them spontaneously without any need of a formal, mechanical process. They furnish definite rules for determining what is of obligation and what is not; though we must constantly remember that often the better thing to do will be to go beyond these rules and avoid things which might in themselves be done without sin. Moreover, there are certain special circumstances which might make even chaste actions inappropriate, and perhaps even unjust and scandalous. Married people, for instance, have a special obligation to reserve their demonstrations of tender affection to themselves. The girl who trespasses upon a wife's right to the affection of her husband does wrong, even though no real unchastity be involved; so too the man who disregards a husband's right to his wife's affection. And it goes without saying that those who are consecrated to God have renounced their right even to such expressions of affection as might be permissible to other unmarried people of different sexes.

We mentioned these examples to indicate that at times special factors must be considered which are not included in our principles concerning chastity. In our summary in this chapter and in the practical cases in the next, we shall presume that no such special factors are present.

Sixth Commandment

It may now be helpful to summarize the principal conclusions of this chapter in terms of the Sixth and Ninth Commandments of God. The Sixth Commandment commands us to be pure in our external actions, and forbids all actions against purity; therefore in terms of what is sinful or not sinful it may be visualized as follows:

Mortal Sin:

a) All directly venereal actions. (Principle I)

b) All other actions performed for the purpose of stimulating or promoting venereal pleasure. (Principle II)

c) All actions involving the proximate danger of performing a directly venereal action or of consenting to venereal pleasure. (Principle III)

Venial Sin: Indirectly venereal actions performed without a relatively sufficient reason. (Principle IV)

No Sin: Indirectly venereal actions performed with a relatively sufficient reason. (Principle V)

In this summary we give only the points that pertain to one's personal chastity. It should not be forgotten that if others are concerned in these external actions, charity demands that we consider them; also at times other factors must be considered, such as the special obligations of one's state of life, as indicated before.

Ninth Commandment

The Ninth Commandment prescribes chastity of thought, and forbids unchaste thoughts. In this matter of thoughts, some preliminary explanation is necessary before formulating our summary because the question of sinful thoughts is frequently misunderstood. In the first place, it should be clear to everyone that a *thought which is not wilful cannot be sinful*. We have no absolute control over our imaginations; they frequently retain disturbing images, no matter what we try to do about it. There is simply no question of sin when that occurs.

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It should also be clear (though it frequently is not) that not all wilful thinking about sexual matters is sinful. Thoughts differ vastly from external actions in this: There are some kinds of external actions (directly venereal) which may never be done by unmarried people; there is no action which may not be *thought about*. For instance, in studying or reading a book of this kind, one necessarily thinks about many impure actions. The mere thinking about them does not make them sinful.

The one thing which is absolutely wrong in regard to thoughts is to think about a sinful action, *with approval of what is sinful*. In general, this might be done in three ways; and a few examples should illustrate the point clearly:

a) John thinks about the sin of fornication, with the willful desire or intention of committing it. In this case he gives his approval of sin by desiring or intending to commit it.

b) Mary once committed the sin of fornication, and now she thinks about that action, and wilfully rejoices over the fact that she committed it. In other words, Mary, instead of having sorrow for the sin as she should have, here and now goes over it again in her mind with wilful approval of what she did.

c) James also thinks about the sin of fornication. He has no intention of actually performing the external action; be is not approving of anything he did in the past, but here and now he wilfully delights in imagining that he is performing the act. James is giving his approval of a sinful act by wilfully taking complacency in the thought of doing it.

Note that in each of these cases the sin consisted in wilfully approving of an act which it would be sinful to perform. If one should approve of an act which is not sinful for him to perform, then such approval would not be sinful. For instance, marital relations are certainly not sinful for married people; hence they may desire them beforehand and rejoice over them afterwards. It might be dangerous for even married people to dwell long on such thoughts because they might prove strongly stimulating to passion and bring about temptations to self-abuse; but the thoughts of approval would not be wrong for them because the acts they think about are permissible for married people.

Note that we have stressed the point that thoughts are sinful when they express *wilful* approval of evil (wilful desires, wilful complacency, wilful rejoicing). This is quite different from the involuntary sense of approval or desire that comes upon almost anyone who has to think of various sexual acts. Such things are naturally attractive to the lower appetites but that mere natural urge is not an act of the free will.

With this preliminary explanation of the particularly difficult points concerning thoughts, we can now summarize our principles as they apply to the Ninth Commandment:

Mortal Sin:

a) The *wilful approval* of unchaste actions. (Cf. foregoing explanation and Principle I.)

b) The wilful entertaining of any thoughts *for the purpose of* stimulating or promoting venereal passion. (Principle II. This kind of thinking is about the same as self-abuse.)

c) The wilful harboring of thoughts which involve *the proximate danger* of performing an unchaste action, approving of such an action, or consenting to venereal pleasure. (Principle III)

Venial Sin: Thinking about sexually-stimulating things without a sufficient reason. (Principle IV)

No Sin: Thinking about sexually-stimulating things with a sufficient reason. (Principle V)

Chapter XI

SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

We have already suggested great numbers of particular applications of the principles. However, there are certain cases that are so frequently proposed that we think it might be of some help to the reader to show how the principles may be applied to these cases.

Kissing and Embracing

In some cases the application of the principles is clear; in others it is extremely difficult. It should be clear, for instance, that in the following cases, kissing and embracing are *seriously sinful:* a) if immodest intimacy is involved; b) if the motive of one or both parties is impure; c) if the proximate danger of something seriously sinful is involved, e.g., the parties know from experience that even modest acts generally lead to a low of control on the part of one or both.

Also, it should be clear that two people eligible for marriage and genuinely in love *do not sin* by manifesting their love in a modest and moderate fashion, with a reasonable assurance of controlling themselves should passion be unintentionally aroused. Again, the kiss or embrace which is according to a recognized convention *of good people* is not sinful. Generally speaking, such things do not arouse passion, or, if they do, it is slight and easily controlled.

Numbers of other cases are not so easily solved in a sentence or two. Certain quasi-conventions are creeping in among us that present difficulties. The kiss is coming to be a way of saying, "thank you"; also, "I like you," instead of "I love you." In particular, there is the ease in which a boy kisses a girl goodnight instead of shaking hands. That these things are established customs may be doubted. Certainly they have a tendency to cheapen the traditional meaning of the kiss and experience shows that they give rise to dangerous situations. Nevertheless, though we deprecate the tendency to set up such a custom and though we warn against the dangers, we must admit that

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according to the strict application of our principles, moderate kisses or embraces of this quasi-conventional kind are not sinful for those who guard against the dangers.

Kissing or embracing out of mere general sex interest in rarely, if ever, wholly justifiable. There in usually an. element of uncertain danger involved. When such acts are prolonged and accompanied by strong passion, this is a fairly good sign that the real motive is physical attraction. Even genuine lovers have to be moderate. When their embraces are repeated and ardent, even after physical passion has been considerably aroused, there is good reason to suspect that the affection they are manifesting is *conjugal*, that is that it includes the physical sphere. This would be seriously wrong.

An we mentioned, many of these cams are hard to answer in a general way. To give more definite answers for concrete cases, one has to know more of the frequency of the acts, the temperament of the parties, their virtue, and so forth. Hence the need of personal direction.

Reading

Before trying to apply our principles to reading, let us call attention to two points. First, reading is practically the same as thinking, and it is solved on the same principles. However, there is this important difference: reading offers new and novel food for thought, sometimes very attractively phrased; hence it is frequently more dangerous than mere thinking.

Secondly, there are certain kinds of reading that are forbidden by the Church and such things may not be read without permission. Forbidden reading in the matter of chastity includes: a) books or articles that attack the Catholic teaching on Chastity; b) books or articles that are professedly *obscene*. (Cf. p. 76 for explanation of obscenity.) These prohibitions include books and articles that defend artificial birth control, free love, divorce with remarriage, and so forth; also novels and stories that specialize in sexually exciting scenes portrayed in an alluring manner. They also include the pseudo-scientific trash printed today which is really nothing but a sugar-coated allurement to vice and perversion. In forbidding all such reading, the Church is simply exercising her solemn commission to safeguard the sacred moral teaching of Christ and to protect her children against grave moral danger. The reading of such books without permission is seriously sinful, even for an individual who feels that he would not be harmed by them. He must obtain permission from the Bishop. Such permissions are given only with the greatest caution; and of course, even one who has permission to read forbidden books is not exempt from the Divine Law as enunciated in oar principles.

Supposing that there is no prohibition by Church law, we can now apply our moral principles to reading. Here again we find certain *clear cases of mortal sin:* a) if one reads about sinful things and approves of them (cf. Thoughts); b) if one reads even good things (e.g. a physiology book) for the purpose of exciting venereal passion; c) if the reading involves the proximate danger of harboring seriously sinful thoughts or desires, of doing something seriously sinful, or of consenting to venereal pleasure.

Also, there are some clear cases in which *no sin is involved*. Those who have a serious reason for reading (e.g. doctors, nurses, spiritual directors, teachers, young people about to be married who need some instruction regarding the physical side of marriage) do not sin, even though they should be strongly excited, provided that they control their wills. Even mere entertainment justifies one in ignoring occasional slight motions of passion caused perhaps by a few suggestive pictures or passages in books or magazines that are otherwise decent.

But mere entertainment is not usually a complete justification for reading things that one finds strongly stimulating, even in an otherwise decent book or magazine. There is no reasonable proportion between mere amusement and strong temptation; hence negligence manifested by delaying over such passages would be venially sinful. In fact, if one indulges in this kind of "amusement" repeatedly, especially if he form the habit of curiously going back over stimulating scenes, he might have reason to suspect the sincerity of his motive. At the minimum, a habit of this kind is very dangerous.

Conversation

By conversation here we mean taking part in a conversation. We shall add a word later about *merely listening*. Conversation, as we are considering it now, is like *thinking* in that it is an external expression of one's thoughts; it is like *reading* insofar as it is a way of receiving the thoughts of others; and it is like external actions in the sense that it usually means the physical presence of at least two people.

As in the other applications, so in regard to conversation, there are certain cases in which serious sin is evident: a) when one simply gives external expression to impure thoughts, e.g. sinful desires, boasting about sins committed, approving sins committed by others; b) when it is equivalently a method of mutual stimulation, as may be the case in really obscene conversation, or in strongly suggestive conversation between a boy and a girl; c) or when the motive of one or other party is impure, e.g., seeking to arouse passion or to induce the other to sin; d) and finally, when the proximate danger of some serious sin against purity is present.

Serious conversation about sexual topics is of course permissible when there is a sufficient reason for it and proper precautions are taken. Today sex is talked of much more freely than formerly. Some of this talk is too free, but it is difficult to give a mechanical rule for such situations. One has to judge of the propriety and danger for oneself.

What about *jokes*? If they are merely *vulgar* (e.g. concerning the wants of nature) there is usually no offense against chastity. Sometimes such things offend charity by wounding the reasonable sensibilities of others. Also, at times, because of the association of ideas or because of the circumstances in which such stories are told (e.g. between opposite sexes), there may be real dangers to chastity. If so, there is no justification for such conversation.

The so-called "humorous" stories with sexy content present a more difficult problem. It should be noted that these stories are at least supposed to be funny, not obscene; and they derive their entertainment value from the combination of humor and natural interest that. people are apt to have in things pertaining to sex. As a general rule, they are to be discouraged; but the question of the sinfulness of them cannot be dismissed simply by saying: "Better not tell them."

Certainly many people tell such stories without subjective sin. They are not bothered by them, and the thought of sin does not disturb their

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minds. But in this matter, they have to assume some responsibility for their listeners. Things like this can easily give scandal. The best we can do here is indicate some rather general norms for judging scandal--norms which may be open to many exceptions in concrete cases. In a group composed of mature people of the same sex, it is quite likely that such stories do little or no harm. In a mature mixed group the danger is more likely. When adolescents are concerned, the danger is very great, because they are highly imaginative and the sexual content of the story is apt to return again and again in the form of severe temptation. It is hard to excuse an adult who exposes adolescents to this danger from the serious sin of scandal, because the very fact that an older person tells the story impresses it the more strongly on a young mind. As for young people who tell such stories among themselves, we can say only this: it is hard to give a definite rule for mortal sin. But such things are rarely, if ever, completely without sin, because the mere fun of telling a story is never a justifying reason for the uncertain danger of temptation practically always present.

What about *merely listening*? Sometimes people listen to such stories because there is nothing else they can do about it. Under such circumstances they do not sin. At other times, the listening is wilful, i.e., the party could either leave or change the trend of conversation. In these circumstances, one must, of course, protect oneself, even by leaving if that is necessary. Also, charity demands that we protect others if we can reasonably do so. Hence, if the conversation is really dangerous, one should change the subject if possible. Some can do this very gracefully; others do more harm than good by trying it. Occasional laughs at things that sound funny tire not sinful, but one should be careful t o avoid furthering dangerous topics in this way.

Involuntary Sexual Stimulation

As a final practical help, we consider certain situations which occur fairly frequently and which are apt to be a source of great annoyance if one does not know the principle which must guide him in such circumstances. We refer to the question of sexual thoughts and sensations which are entirely involuntary, which arise, for instance, from fatigue, from some local irritation, from nervousness, or some glandular condition, and other such things. In other words, they are more or less spontaneous, and do not arise from any action which is under our control and which can be measured by the principles already explained in this chapter.

Sometimes these thoughts and sensations tire merely transitory, its is the case in passing thoughts or sensations aroused by inadvertent glances. In such cases, the best thing to do is to pay no attention to the thoughts or physical reaction.

At other times, especially when these involuntary sexual disturbances arise from physical causes like those mentioned above, they are apt to be very prolonged and to be the source of very severe temptation. They frequently become especially bothersome when one is trying to rest. They may begin very suddenly, or they may be a sort of climax to a two- or three-day period in which one realizes that he is particularly responsive to sexual stimuli. For trying times like these, keep the following rules in mind.

1. Such involuntary notions become mortally sinful only when one makes them perfectly voluntary by deliberately promoting them or deliberately approving of and enjoying them.

2. They are not sinful at all if one does what he reasonably can to be rid of any temptation involved in them. Such reasonable efforts differ with individual cases. In general. everyone should adopt such simple schemes as the following: make a brief, calm act of the will, "I don't want it"; say a little aspiration for grace; try to divert the mind to something else that is interesting, especially to something humorous make a brief change in external occupation, if possible. Such simple devices can be employed by most people without tiny nervous strain, and for people who are accustomed to controlling themselves, these means generally suffice to protect the will against sin. Those who have allowed themselves to fall into a habit of sin may often have to be more strenuous in their opposition and must at this time especially recall the strongest motives they know for keeping chaste.

People who are accustomed to lead a chaste life and who are suffering these temptations merely because of some physical condition should keep in mind that it is neither obligatory nor prudent to deprive themselves of sleep or do things which will augment a nervous condition in order to show that they don't want these sensations. They show that sufficiently by one of the simple devices mentioned above. So long as they safeguard their will by such things, the involuntary sexual passion is no more sinful than a headache.

Evidently, things which take place while one is sleeping cannot be sinful. A more difficult situation occurs when one is half-awake. In general, unless one is fully awake, he has not sufficient self-control to commit a serious sin; but sometimes there occur doubtful cases in which one is not sure whether he was fully awake or not, whether he consented or not, and so forth. The presumption is that people who try constantly to lead a chaste life do not sin at these times; on the other hand, the presumption is against those who ordinarily lead an impure life and are in the habit of giving in to temptations.

Confession

The confession of sins of impurity involves points of the utmost delicacy. Both confessor and penitent will be helped a great deal if these simple rules are observed.

1. If you have real mortal sins to confess, then you must tell what you did and how often you did it. This is God's law, not man's. A confessor may not give absolution till he knows the kind of sin and the number of times. This does not mean that one must give a detailed description of his thoughts or acts; such details are entirely unbecoming in the confessional. But he must frankly state the kind of sin (self-abuse, immodest embracing, fornication, adultery, and so on) and the number of times each sin was committed. A wholesome frankness relieves the confessor of the burden of asking many questions that are distasteful to him and embarrassing to the penitent. When a confession is made frankly, then a confessor need ask only such questions as he judges necessary for helping the penitent.

2. If you are confessing sins of impurity, and you mean only venial sins (for example: negligence in regard to thoughts, lack of sufficient reason in external acts) or mere temptations (for example, imaginations or feelings that were not wilful), then indicate this to the confessor. Otherwise, he may think you mean mortal sins.

3. If you wish to confess doubtful sins (for example, you doubt about consent, or whether you confessed the matter before), then mention your doubt. Strictly speaking, doubtful sins do not have to be confessed, though it is better to do so unless your confessor judges otherwise. Nor

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does one have to abstain from Holy Communion when be merely doubts whether he has sinned. Before Communion, however, One should make an act of perfect contrition. Scrupulous people should do what their confessor tells them to do. They are unable to judge their own cases.

A parenthetical word about the "lax conscience." A person is said to have a lax conscience if he easily and habitually excuses himself from sin when he has no valid excuse; he makes venial sins out of mortal sins, and he is inclined to see no sin at all in things that normally careful people recognize as venial sins. Some authorities hesitate to allow lax people the benefit of any doubt. Perhaps the most correct way of stating the rule for lax persons is as follows: if they really and sincerely doubt, they are allowed the same "benefit of the doubt" that normal people enjoy. It is therefore a matter of sincerity. The lax should remember that they are strongly inclined to "doubt" about their guilt when it ought to be rather clear to them that they are guilty. If they want to get over their habit of laxity (as they are obliged to do) it is usually necessary for them to lean to the side of strictness.

4. Finally, all who have difficulties in regard to chastity should have a regular confessor. This holds true for those who have formed a habit of sin; also for those who do not sin, but have trying temptations; also for those who are inclined to be scrupulous. As a general rule, it is a good thing for all people to have a regular confessor, but it is especially necessary for those we just mentioned to get a sympathetic confessor and go to him regularly.

Chapter XII

THE BEAUTY OF CHASTITY

In the preceding chapters we gave the accepted principles of Catholic Theology for distinguishing between what is sinful and what is not sinful in regard to chastity. These principles preserve a right conscience, and they should be clearly known. Nor should they be looked upon as merely negative norms, for, as a matter of fact, one who lives constantly according to these principles must practice a great deal of positive virtue and exercise much self-restraint.

However, the Christian ideal goes much beyond those moral principles. The ideal is to avoid *all* sources of sexual stimulation that can be avoided without loss of common sense. We say, "without loss of common sense," because the Christian ideal is not a mere vision; it recognizes the fact that some unintentional stimulation is simply unavoidable, and it is not intended to engender scruples. But one can have the attitude, "I'll aim much higher than the mere avoidance of sin," and still preserve a high quality of common sense and avoid all semblance of scruples. In keeping with this ideal, for instance, we always urge young women to be extremely reserved in allowing even morally permissible favors to lovers; we encourage young people in general to learn to enjoy one another's company without physical contact; we urge that Legion of Decency lists be followed, and that motion pictures that are even partly objectionable be avoided as much as possible, and that "spotted" magazines and books be read only when there is some especially good reason for doing so. In a word, we propose chastity as something to be loved and treasured.

Strong Motivation Needed

To live constantly according to correct moral principles and Christian ideals is hard, and no one will do it without the driving force of high motivation. Mere fear is not enough. Certainly the fear of physical consequences, which is so much emphasized in the hygienic programs of today, will not produce a chaste generation. The fear of the moral con- sequences, particularly the fear of death and hell, is stronger; and we need this kind of fear. Too many people today are forgetting that there is a hell, or trying to ignore it; and the result is that they make light of mortal sin, which is the gateway to hell. Yet the fear of hell will not in itself suffice for complete chastity. It does not sufficiently guard the approaches to unchastity. To keep every such approach safeguarded so that there is no trifling, no negligence, so that there is a constant endeavor to live on the positive side of the line requires it positive love of chastity. One has to want chastity, complete chastity; and this desire must get into the bloodstream. It must be a motive power that works when it is needed. There are many people for whom purity is extremely attractive in their quiet moments. They go to Holy Communion, say their prayers, and want most fervently to be chaste. But in the moment of temptation, purity loses its attractiveness and looks old and weatherbeaten. Evil appears glamorous.

Vice Is Ugly

Let us face this fact squarely: we are too prone to think of virtue as drab and to attribute all the attractiveness in the world to evil. Hence we accustom ourselves to look upon the practice of virtue solely from the point of view of repression. *The opposite is the real truth.* Remove the lying cosmetics from evil's countenance, and you find only ugliness. The sinner may have what he calls the rousing time the night before, but he has the headache the next day. Most people who have not entirely succumbed to degradation sense a bitter, shameful feeling of detestation shortly after committing a sin; and particularly is this true of the sin of impurity.

When we take a good square look at a habit of impurity, we see that the following statements are true: Such a habit becomes a thorough-going tyrant; it is worse than any dictator. It keeps making more and more demands; it eats away ideals of moral goodness; it makes a person afraid of the open. It breeds selfishness of the worst kind; the impure man will sacrifice anything to satisfy his passion. The will becomes like jelly; the reason becomes a slave to mere physical instincts, when it should be their master.

Virtue Is True Beauty

On the other hand, no sane person will deny that chastity, even apart from any peculiarly Christian glory that may characterize it, is beautiful. Chastity has a beneficial influence on the whole character. The chaste person has a sense of will-control, a confidence that he can look the world straight in the eye; usually he has a clear mind; though he may not be a natural leader, he commands the involuntary respect of others, and often he has an indefinable power in dealing with them.

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At first sight, one might be inclined to question such statements; yet, if they are not true, why is it that few men want a wife who has not kept pure and that few parents want their children to look upon them with a auspicious eye IAnd why is it that even the United States Government tried sometime ago to impress its young men with the fact that their sex powers are a sacred trust and that any girl who accompanies them is also a sacred trust I We have heard any number of young men state that they really respect the young woman who quietly refuses to be "pawed over." And we have heard an equal number of girls say that they breathe a sigh of relief when they find that a young man is not out to see how far he can go, but that he respects her as a human being, as a friend, and as a lady. These various facts show that fundamentally we all recognize that chastity and modesty are really worth while. As one young man once expressed it: "The decent people I know seem to be transformed by the fact that they are decent."

Christian Motivation

The foregoing considerations might be profitable to all. As Catholics, we can go much beyond them. Our Faith is supposed to supply us with motives for virtue, and we might say that it offers particularly strong motives for chastity.

In the first part of this book we gave some idea of a real Christian attitude toward sex in its various manifestations. We saw the beauty that can belong to human life when allowance is made for the orderly, gradual development of sexual inclinations: the harmonious, happy social life that goes with general sex attraction, provided other impulses are restrained; the beauty of love, when it is true love, not mere fascination or passion; the supremely lovely signification of physical sex expression when it is used as a seal on a solemnly contracted Christian marriage. But this lofty ideal of sex also shows the desecration of sexual abuse. It is something like an unordained person attempting to say Mass. The Mass itself is the most glorious thing in the world when said by a true priest; but when some impostor goes through the same ceremonies it is sacrilege of the worst kind. Again, the confessional is sacred; yet the layman who usurped the place of the priest would certainly commit a black sacrilege. These are, of course, only analogies, but they bring out the point. The use of sexual powers, according to their full Christian meaning as signifying the love of Christ for His Church, is surely beautiful; but the exercise of that same power in any way whatsoever outside of marriage is seen all the more as a desecration in the light of this Christian truth.

The Christian love of purity and hatred of impurity is closely connected with a typical Christian attitude toward the body. This attitude is one of great reverence. Not abhorrence, notice, but reverence--reverence for something our Lord wishes to be sacred. You bring a child for Baptism, and it is his body that is washed and anointed; at Confirmation, the body is anointed; in Holy Communion, it is into the body that Christ our Lord comes. At Ordination, the hands are anointed; in Marriage, the spouses give to each other their bodies; and when we prepare to leave the world, once more the body is anointed. In the religious life, the habit (which symbolizes the whole life) veils the body as a sign of total consecration of the person to God.

This attitude of inspired reverence for the body is contained in germ in scholastic philosophy, according to which the body and soul make a unit, one person; the soul animates the whole body, every part of it; and the body is the soul's helpmate in its quest for God. But far beyond the scope of natural reason is the body exalted by the truths of divine revelation. Go back to that splendid Sixth Chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, and ponder the truths it contains.

St. Paul's Doctrine

Know you not that your bodies are members of Christ! The moment the waters of Baptism flow over the body, a new supernatural life courses through the person. He belongs to Christ, is consecrated to Him, body and soul. "Ye are Christ's." We Catholics are apt to smile sweetly at a sublime truth like that, profess our faith in the mystery of it, and then let it go at that. Not so St. Paul. He preached the truth as a practical principle, something to vitalize our moral activity. Suppose one were to cultivate the habit of recalling that truth in the moment of an impure temptation, or when inclined to let down the bars of reserve a bit! Suppose that at such times, lie were to face himself squarely with this challenge: "My body belongs to Jesus Christ. Can I use it as an instrument of sin!" We are deeply convinced that not one of us would have the heart to sin-if we may use the expression-if that truth could get to our weakening wills in the time of temptation or negligence.

Your body is destined to rise with Christ in Glory! The second of St. Paul's great appeals for purity. He turns the eye of hope on the future; what matters the suffering of present self-restraint in view of the fact that this mortal body is destined to share in the immortality of the Resurrection? This particular truth has an intimate connection with the reception of Holy Communion. Every time our Lord comes down to the Communion rail to meet us, He plants within us anew the seed of the Resurrection. The purity that is now so difficult will then shine with a lustre beyond our most vivid imaginations. Is there any doubt that if a truth like this could imbed itself within our minds--as St. Paul wanted it to--it could act as a successful barrier against sin and as an inspiration to a lofty purity?

Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit Who is within you? Another of those "sweet mysteries" for most of us Catholics. Yet what a terrifically vital mystery it is! God dwells within the soul in the state of grace as in a living temple. Try making this mystery- realistic. We suggest to young men: The next time you think of the girl you love, close your eyes to her natural bodily charm. and impress upon yourself that she is a living tabernacle, a shrine of the living God. And then make a resolution. never to desecrate that shrine. And let the girl think of the young man in the same light. And let each of us think occasionally, especially in time of temptation, of the fact that our own bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost. Thoughts like this inspire us to avoid defilement. St. Paul was full of them, and he was convinced of their power. No wonder that at the conclusion of his great triple appeal for purity his enthusiasm burst out in that trumpet call to the highest Christian idealism: "Ye are bought with a price. Glorify and bear God in your bodies."

Devotion to Mary

A pure woman always exerts a profound influence on lier friends. Since the days of Christianity's infancy the Blessed Virgin Mary has been inspiring boys and girls, men and women, to try to preserve their souls in perfect purity. Her appeal is perhaps more apt to reach the heart than those very sublime, but legs tangible, motives on which St. Paul insisted so strongly. Those who sincerely and constantly cultivate her friendship do want to be pure. And they find, too, that she gives effective help to achieve the ideal to which she inspires them. It would indeed be interesting to know how many of her devoted children have kept their purity through most trying occasions because they were faithful in saying three Hail Marys a day in her honor and prompt in turning to her when tempted against purity.

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Love of Christ

There is a final Christian motive for chastity which should be especially appealing to young men and women of today. Perhaps we can best explain it by recounting a little anecdote that the priest reads in his Breviary on May 3, the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross. There the story is told that some time after the fall of Jerusalem, the pagans went out to Mount Calvary and erected a temple to the goddess of lust, "in order to blot out the memory of the Cross and the Passion." A significant little incident, is it not IAnyone who reads the story of the early Christian martyrs will find that the pagans tried repeatedly to undermine Christianity by undermining the chastity of the Christians. That was particularly their method with the young.

Now, the vital force of Christianity is the love of Jesus Christ, utter devotion to Christ as our leader and our God. It is not just a poetic dream, it is a tremendous reality---and just as much so today as it was in the days of the early Church. Our modern pagans hate Him just as much as did the ancients, and their attacks on the followers of Christ are very much the same. Today they try even more viciously than of old to break down our chastity, because they know that if they can do this they can explode our whole moral code; and if they destroy our moral code, our dogmas will be of little avail. So goes the plan: they would not dare ask us to deny our faith in Christ; but they do try to put sex liberalism into our schools, tainted pictures on our screens, obscene books and magazines into our hands. It is an old, old story. The Romans had the same plan two thousand years ago.

This fact shows us as nothing else does the tremendous importance of chastity. It is not, as we have insisted before, the greatest Christian virtue; charity is queen of them all. But generally speaking it is the most practical expression of sincere love for Christ. Neither Christ nor His Church ever preached a theoretical, dreamy sort of love. He preached the love of action: "If you love me, keep my commandments." In the ordinary living out of our daily lives, this test of love reaches its height in the so-called difficult commandment, the Commandment of Purity. Chastity is a concrete expression of personal love of Christ. And chastity is apostolic, for its good example has far-reaching effects on the souls of others.

Common-Sense Protection

The thoughts we have suggested show that chastity is something worth while, something sacred. Now we should like to follow a simple little analogy here. If you plant some flowers that are very rare and precious, you do not put them right out to the edge of the sidewalk and draw a fine line in your mind and say: People are not likely to put their feet beyond this line. If you love and appreciate a baby, you are not apt to leave it on the top of a table, even if it is a nice baby and not accustomed to roll much. When you have money and a choice of two investments, you do not choose a "pretty safe" security when you can get a safer one to pay equal dividends.

If we transfer this prudent policy to the realm of virtue, it takes but little mental acumen to conclude that one who is thoroughly convinced of the worthwhileness of chastity, of its sacredness, of its Christlikeness, does not live a borderline life. You would move the flowers a safe distance from the sidewalk and build a little fence around them; you would put the baby in a cradle or a baby carriage; you would consider yourself a fool not to take the safer investment, when it pays at least as well. So, in regard to purity, the man who loves and treasures it, says to himself : "My purity is something too good to trifle with. Why expose myself needlessly to any kind of sexual stimulation? There's nothing to gain, and there's a lot to lose." So he moves the precious flower of his chastity back from the sidewalk by avoiding all unnecessary occasions of stimulation, and he builds about it a protective fence of prayer and self-denial; and, far from developing maples or harmful worries, he feels much relieved that this pledge of his love for Christ is well protected.

It Can Be Done

In this chapter we have given motives that are capable Of inspiring to chastity. But let us repeat-they have to *get into the bloodstream*. They are useless when kept on one's bookshelf, or in a notebook, or left in Church after Mass on Sunday morning. They have to form part of a dominant ideal, the centralizing force of which is the love of Jesus Christ. Nothing else will carry us through the difficulties we must face today.

One of the deadliest obstacles to the practical power of then motives is an undercurrent of suspicion that "the thing can't be done." This is one of the subtlest form of modern pagan propaganda. Materialists, who look upon man an a mere animal, like to keep repeating: "It can't be done. Chastity is a myth. I I Sometimes they give their testimony in the name of science. "Chastity is unnatural," they say. "The sexual urge is the voice of nature. Man must yield to it, or he'll break down." Obviously, the answer to this is that the "voice of nature" for man is the voice of the nature that God gave him, and that happens to be a different nature from that of Fido, the dog. It is man's nature to guide his instincts reasonably, not to follow them blindly. If the man who controls his sexual urges according to the law of God breaks down, you may be sure that the cause of his breakdown is not the practice of self-discipline. The breakdown can always be traced to something else: to a misguided way of conducting himself, to a brooding fear, to a false idea of what is or is not sinful, or to an inner conflict arising from the fact that he was not giving his whole heart to the practice of chastity.

The so-called scientific testimony about the harmfulness of continence can always be counterbalanced by more weighty scientific testimony in favor of continence. We have on hand, while writing this, several statements of great medical worth, and we know that they can be multiplied by the score. At an international congress at Brussels, the physicians agreed: "There is no known disease resulting from the practice of continence, whilst many are found to originate in the opposite vice." Another testimony is that of 370 doctors on this continent to the effect that: "There is no evidence that continence is inconsistent with the highest physical, mental, and moral efficiency; and continence offers the only sure reliance of sexual health outside of marriage." A report of the British Social Hygiene Council stated that neither psychology nor experience shows any need of sexual intercourse for either physical or mental health.

Such testimonies could, as we said, be multiplied by the score. Yet their value is of small significance compared with the *fact of 2000 years of Christianity*. One of the outstanding glories of the Church is the fact that she is able to inspire her people, particularly her youth, with a practical ideal of chastity and thus keeps them self-sacrificing and pure in a world that is both self-loving and sense-loving. Doctor Foerster rightly appeals to the example of the saints as one of the most forceful arguments for the fact that chastity is possible. Any Catholic priest, who deals with multitudes of souls, could tell you in general terms and without violating any secrecy that there are vast numbers who lead chaste lives, even in the midst of violent temptations. These legions of souls, of coarse, never make the headlines.

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Another source of discouragement, tending to weaken our motive power, even though we do not suspect it, is the modern tendency to make polls. College youths are polled, married couples are polled; and the result of the poll is almost always the same gruesome, depressing conclusion: that almost everyone seems to be unchaste. We ought to ask ourselves honestly: how many decent people are apt to respond to such polls? The percentages are biased from the start. Certainly they offer no valid argument as to the relative number of the chaste and the unchaste; they merely prove that there is a vast amount of unchastity in the world. And we all know that without any polls. No one who wants to be chaste need be discouraged by these gloomy surveys.

Personal Frailty

Worst of all the undermining forces of motive power is the hopeless conviction of personal frailty. Especially those who have contracted habits of impurity are likely to develop strong feelings that chastity is impossible for them. They have to counteract this with their Faith. Certainly it is difficult, and it really cannot be done without the grace of God. But with the grace of God, even the strongest temptations can be overcome, and anyone who shows good will can get the grace. It is simply a matter of getting sympathetic direction and of taking the necessary means day by day.

So, we need conviction, conviction that chastity is tremendously worth while, and conviction that with the grace of God it is our prize. And then the thing to do is to practice it. Here is a general outline of the main things such practice entails:

1) *Cultivate the other virtues and a general spirit of self-denial.* Chastity is not a flower that blooms alone on a barren strip of land; no real virtue does that. It needs the fertile soil of a well-kept soul. The chaste man must cultivate other virtues and control other emotions. It is absurd for a person to let his temper fly at will, to speak and act selfishly, to pamper his appetite to allow free rein to sentiment, yet expect to be immune from impure temptations or to die like a Swiss Guard rather than surrender to them.

2) *Avoid all really unnecessary sexual stimulants.* This includes such things as thoughts, reading, speech, shows, intimacies, and so forth. When we say "avoid them," we are not suggesting that one adopt a clenched-fist attitude that amounts to this: "I must repress myself." Chastity is not mere *repression*; it is the *expression* of the human, the noble, the Christlike in us. By "avoiding" things we mean cultivating the positive attitude that it just isn't worth while to lead a borderline life. This has to be done in a common-sense way; and perhaps that is best explained in the next point.

3) *Keep a sensible attitude toward the things that cannot reasonably be avoided.* We cannot avoid all unintentional sexual stimulation. A certain amount of this depends on physical conditions, as has already been explained. Also, living as social human beings almost inevitably brings us into contact with things that are sexually disturbing. The moral principles we enunciated solve these cases and should be the source of peace of conscience. We cannot hide ourselves from society; we cannot go through life with dark glasses. High idealism and common sense must go hand in hand; and sensitive people are especially in need of common sense.

4) *Keep interested in something.* When one has no absorbing interests in life, it is natural enough to develop a morbid interest in sex. That is one of the dangers of moods, of reactions from strain, examinations, and such things. The soul gets flat and is not interested in life; and impurity becomes a "pleasant distraction." When boys and girls are together, if they have not innocent, interesting things to do, they easily turn to amuse themselves with conduct that is either sinful in itself or that quickly leads to sin.

5) *Pray and frequent the Sacraments.* Not only are these divine aids necessary for avoiding sin, but they are especially necessary for preserving the motive force that keeps one living on a high plane.

Chapter XIII

CELIBACY

"How great is the dignity of chaste wedlock," are the opening words of Pius XI's memorable encyclical on Christian Marriage. In our book we have kept this sublime teaching constantly in mind; we have pointed out that the generative faculty is a gift of God, that marriage is a divine institution, raised to Sacramental dignity by Christ our Lord. Through marriage, souls are born for the Kingdom of God in this world, and the Kingdom of Heaven in the next. Marriage lived according to Christian principles produces saintly husbands and wives, saintly fathers and mothers. It is, therefore, a noble state of life, a perfect state of life.

Yet, the solemn teaching of the Church recognizes celibacy and virginity, voluntarily embraced from a motive of virtue, as more perfect and more noble than marriage. This does not mean that the Church glorifies the mere renunciation of marriage; the renunciation must be made from a motive of virtue. It does not mean that for every individual celibacy would be the more perfect thing. That is precisely the reason for making a choice of a state of life: each must decide in what state of life he, with his own particular talents and opportunities, can serve God more perfectly. Yet the fact remains that if any individual could decide that he was equally fitted for either marriage or celibacy, a confessor would have to tell him that the latter course would be the more perfect thing.

The Scriptural foundation for this Catholic doctrine is found in our Lord's teaching and in the apostolic doctrine of St. Paul. When the disciples told our Lord that His teaching on marriage was so strict that it would be better for a man not to marry, He answered them: "Not all take in this saying, but they to whom it hath been given. For there are eunuchs who were born so from their mother's womb, and eunuchs who were made such by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves such for the Kingdom of the heavens. He that can take this in, let him take it in. " (St. Matthew, ch. 19, vv. 11,12. Westminster Version.) A eunuch is one who does not possess the use of the generative faculty; hence our Lord's words mean: "There are some who are born without this power; some who are deprived of it by men; and some who voluntarily renounce their right to use it for the Kingdom of Heaven. The last is a higher call, and let him who can follow it do so." St. Paul's teaching in the Seventh Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians may be summarized in these words: One who marries, does well: one who voluntarily remains a virgin does better. From the earliest days of Christianity, these two passages of Scripture have been the foundation of the Catholic doctrine that celibacy and virginity embraced from a motive of virtue constitute a higher state of perfection than marriage.

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Why is virginity preferable to marriage? Because, all other things being equal, the soul that is free from the obligations of marriage and that is resolved to observe absolute chastity is better able to unite itself to God--and this is the highest perfection of the individual soul. Moreover, since the fall of Adam, one of the most signal victories of the human spirit and Divine Grace over the unruly appetites is that of virginity. Finally, in a practical way, it is easy to see that for the work of the priesthood and of religious orders, celibacy affords a freedom from human affairs that is at least highly desirable.

The foregoing are some of the reasons ordinarily given for the superiority of virginity, over marriage. But it seems to us that the full inner meaning of voluntary celibacy and virginity is found only in the light of the entire Gospel of our Lord. His is a message of love: of self-renouncing, self-sacrificing love. Sacrifice was the language of His love for us from the poverty and obscurity of Bethlehem to the blood and humiliations of Calvary. For love of us He turned aside from many comforts and honors that would have been perfectly legitimate for Him.

As our Lord, so His followers. Loving self-renunciation is the language of sanctity. And surely there is nothing unusual in this--that the love of God should find expression in sacrifice. Even merely human love speaks the same language. The true lover *gives*; and he gives, not what is cast off or worthless, but what he considers best and most precious.

Celibacy is but one example of the "Gospel of Sacrifice." Marriage is good; Christian Marriage is truly beautiful. Yet the more one appreciates the meaning and beauty of marriage, the more clearly should he see that the renunciation of marriage can be a superb act of the love of God. He who renounces his right to marry offers to God a "pearl of great price." As our Lord said: "Go, sell what thou hast... and come, follow me"; "He that can take this in, let him take it in."

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